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Mamlūks and Crusaders

Men of the Sword and Men of the Pen

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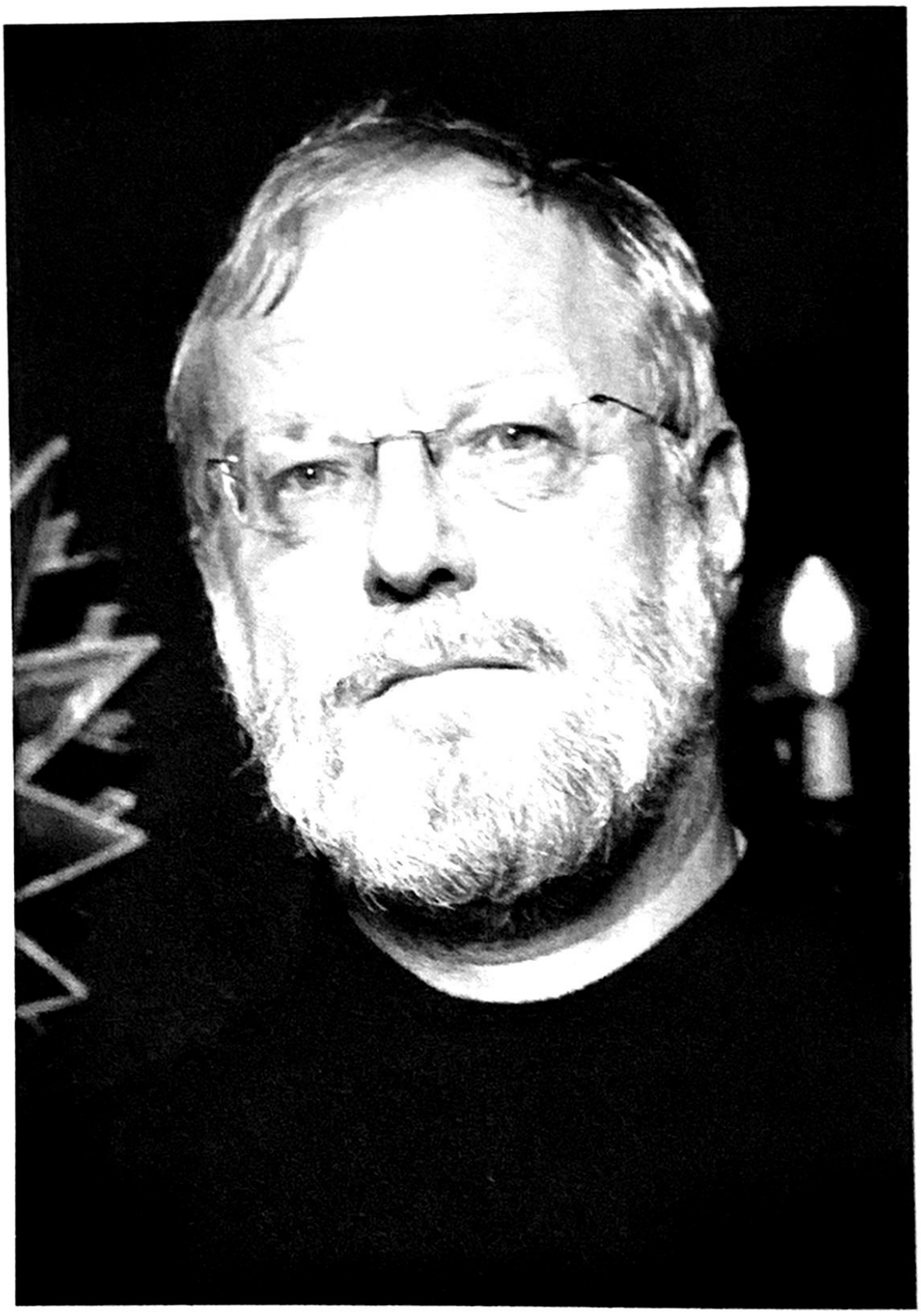

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Mamlūks and Crusaders

Men of the Sword and Men of the Pen

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The articles in this volume, as in all others in the Variorum Collected Studies Series, have not been given a new, continuous pagination. In order to avoid confusion, and to facilitate their use where these same studies have been referred to elsewhere, the original pagination has been maintained wherever possible. Chapter IX of this volume has been re-formatted and given a new pagination.

Each article has been given a Roman number in order of appearance, as listed in the Contents. This number is repeated on each page and is quoted in the index entries.

PREFACE

I first came across the Mamlūks in the pages of Sir Steven Runciman's stylishly written *A History of the Crusades* (1951–54). In the third volume, Runciman described the Mamlūk Sultan Baybars I as follows: 'Personally he had few of the qualities that won respect even from his foes. He was cruel, disloyal and treacherous, rough in his manners and harsh in his speech. His subjects could not love him, but they gave him their admiration, with reason, for he was a brilliant soldier, a subtle politician and a wise administrator, swift and secret in his decisions and clear-sighted in his aims. Despite his slave origins he was a patron of the arts and an active builder, who did much to beautify his cities and to reconstruct his fortresses. As a man he was evil, but as a ruler he was among the greatest of his time'. According to Runciman, Baybars I's campaigning made the ultimate destruction of the crusader states inevitable. I thought that he sounded rather fascinating and, having read about the Mamlūks in Runciman, I decided to do research on the Mamlūk conquest of the Crusader states in the late thirteenth century. The results of that research were published in *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamlūk Sultanate 1250–1382* (1986, and republished in 2002 by the American Council of Learned Societies), as well as in several of the studies included in this Variorum volume. Aspects of Mamlūk culture and society were also covered in *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (1994). (Additionally, in 1983 I published a novel, *The Arabian Nightmare*, which is set in Mamlūk Cairo.)

At the time I started doing research on the Arabic sources for the Mamlūk rule in Egypt and Syria, there was not much published in English on the subject. According to William Muir's *The Mamelūke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt A.D. 1260–1517* (1896), the vast majority of the mamlūks 'with an almost incredible indifference to human life, were treacherous and bloodthirsty, and betrayed, especially in the later days of the Dynasty, a diabolic resort to poison and the rack, the lash, the halter and assassination such as make the blood run cold to think of; and that not only for Imperial objects but to extract money from an unoffending people'. In the twentieth century numerous articles published by David Ayalon and Eliyahu Ashtor presented a more objective picture of aspects of Mamlūk government and society, but they tended to stress and perhaps overstress the extent to which the mamlūks ruled as an alien elite that had little contact with their Arab subjects and no interest in Arab literature and culture.

Later studies by Ulrich Haarmann, Barbara Flemming, Doris Behrens-Abouseif and others have effectively overturned this hostile image. When I started research on

the mamlūks in the 1960s, one could read all the secondary literature on the subject in about a week. Today the same exercise would probably take a year or two and Mamlūk studies is one of the most vibrant and popular areas in the history of the pre-modern Middle East. Much of this explosion of interest and research should be credited to the inspiration of Bruce D. Craig at the Chicago University Library and to the cluster of mamlūkists teaching in and around Chicago. *Mamlūk Studies Review* is published in Chicago and the University hosts an on-line bibliography and an encyclopedia devoted to the mamlūks. But of course important work is being done in Germany, France, Belgium and Israel, as well as in the Arab world. My own survey of the history of the field 'Under western eyes: a history of Mamlūk studies' is included in this volume.

There is still much to be done. In particular it is desirable that a wider range of sources should be looked at. The information provided by the chronicles and biographical dictionaries, copious though it is, is insufficient to present a full picture of the Mamlūk age. The wealth of original sources in Arabic for this period is one of the attractions of this area of research. Another is the light that those sources shed on the history of other regimes, including the Crusader states, the Italian trading republics, the Kingdom of Armenia, the Mongol Ilkhanate in Iran, the Golden Horde in southern Russia. For example, in an article included in this volume, 'What the partridge told the eagle', I have used an Arab literary compilation by Ibn 'Arabshah to shed some light on Mongol society in Central Asia in the time of Chinggis Khan.

As a schoolboy I had a craze for crusader studies. When later I decided to do work on Arab sources for the crusades, one reason was that I believed all the necessary work in publishing the Latin, French and Italian sources on the crusades and the crusader states had been done. Well, I was very young and naïve. Since the 1960s, the history of the crusades has been comprehensively rewritten by Jonathan Riley-Smith, Bernard Hamilton, Peter Edbury, Jonathan Phillips, Peter Jackson, Norman Housley, Christopher Tyerman, Thomas Ashbridge, Malcolm Barber, Susan Edgington, John France and others. The leading role of British historians in crusader studies is striking. Old orthodoxies have been overturned, familiar sources have been reread with fresh eyes and new sources have been brought into play. Even so, there is a lot still to be done on the Arab sources for the crusades. Since I have moved on to work on *The Arabian Nights* and on the history of Orientalism, I hope that someone else will do that work. The material is certainly there and the subject fascinating.

I am grateful to Helen Irwin and John Smedley for making the publication of *Mamlūks and Crusaders* possible.

ROBERT IRWIN

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I

Iqṭā‘ and the end of the Crusader states

> 'For their services, and in proportion to their grades, the [Mamluk] emirs were rewarded with fiefs (Arabic singular *iqṭā‘*) which might be landed estates (compact or scattered), towns, villages or even annual allowances from the revenue of a tax, customs duty or excise levied by the central government. Each emir was obliged to divide two-thirds of his fief among his own private mamluks, by granting them either portions of the fief, or pecuniary allowances from its revenue.'[1]

M. M. Ziada's description of *iqṭā‘* is based fairly closely on that given in A. N. Poliak's *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the Lebanon 1250-1900*,[2] the first work of any substance to focus on the question of the Muslim 'fief', clearly a topic of enormous interest for historians of the Crusader states. Ziada, however, goes on to distinguish between the Western fief and the *iqṭā‘* on the grounds that as far as the latter was concerned, even where the grant appears to be of a designated area of land, it was not an alienation of property by the state, but rather of the tax revenue leviable on that land. Ziada's description of this form of land tenure assigned to the military classes in medieval Egypt and Syria does not differ significantly from those given by other scholars such as Claude Cahen[3] and Hassanein Rabie.[4]

As a characterisation of an institution which existed throughout the period of the Mamluk regime in Egypt and Syria (roughly 1250-1517) it is lucid and broadly satisfactory. Yet naturally this kind of thumb-nail characterisation of a complex institution over a long period of time conceals more questions than it answers - questions which will come easily to the mind of any student of Western feudal tenure or of the Byzantine institution of *pronoia*. A detailed comparison of Ayyubid or Mamluk *iqṭā‘* tenure in Syria with Latin fief tenure in the neighbouring Crusader states in the thirteenth century presents itself to the historian as an attractive possibility, but the clarification of a large number of unresolved problems and a much closer examination of *iqṭā‘* as it evolved in a particular period and place are necessary preconditions for this.

I

Was the tenure of *iqṭā'* restricted to those holding the rank of *amīr* (or 'knights' as A. N. Poliak called them)? What was the comparative extent and importance of *iqṭā'* held by Mamluk *amīrs* and non-Mamluk *amīrs*? If we were to grant that *iqṭā'* was usually an allocation of tax revenue on a designated area of land to the *muqṭa'* (the holder of an *iqṭā'*), of which taxes exactly was it a question? And were other sorts of so-to-speak seigneurial revenue being collected on the same area of land by another type of landlord? Was one expected or indeed allowed to reside on one's *iqṭā'*? How much military service was owed to the state by the *muqṭa'* in any one year? How did the *amīr* raise and maintain the levy he brought with him on campaign? Were particular *iqṭā's* tied to the office or the individual? What rights did the provincial governors have to intervene in *iqṭā's* within their provinces? How was the value of *iqṭā's* calculated and how were they assigned in a period when there were no major cadastral surveys (s. *rawk*)? Did the *muqṭa'* collect his revenues in money or in kind? How large an area of the Mamluk sultanate was placed under *iqṭā'* compared with other forms of tenure? Given that Mamluk *amīrs* were receiving payment on the eve of campaigns and other occasional largesse on the lavish scale that Ayalon's famous study suggests,[5] what need was there for *iqṭā'* at all? A middle-rank *amīr* of forty would receive as *nafaqa* (pay) between four hundred and a thousand dinars, admittedly on an irregular basis, but Professor Ashtor has estimated that a working man could keep himself on an annual income of twelve to eighteen dinars.[6] And do thirteenth-century sources, for instance, use the term *iqṭā'* in a sufficiently precise sense for it to bear the sort of weight these questions put upon it?

This paper is concerned with *iqṭā'* in Palestine and Syria in the late thirteenth century, using insofar as is possible source material that seems to refer to that time and that place, therefore avoiding as much as possible a synthetic and essentially unhistorical perspective on this important institution. One inevitable result of this approach will be that one is using a much smaller volume of literature, in the form of biographies or chronicles, which is interested in sultans, *'ulamā'* and battles and barely if at all, in institutional history. Insofar as is possible the later encyclopaedias produced by the Mamluk chancery are excluded.

In the context of Syria and Palestine in the late thirteenth century further questions arise in relation to *iqṭā'* which are extremely difficult and in many cases impossible to answer. Were there substantial differences between Syrian and Egyptian *iqṭā's* and between Syrian and Egyptian *amīrs*? How far had any system of *iqṭā'* tenure been worked out and codified in the formative period of the Mamluk state? Will not the *ḥalqa* have been playing a much more important role in this period? And indeed, what exactly was the *ḥalqa*? As the Mamluks came to occupy or in many cases to partition the old Crusader territories and place them under *muqṭa's* did the method of levying revenue and the type of revenue levied change?

It is necessary to emphasise the particular significance of Syria and Palestine in the late thirteenth century. As far as the

the period c. 1250-1300 is concerned, it is a time in which the Mamluk system of government is only slowly being worked out. It cannot have sprung up fully grown and equipped like Athene from Zeus's forehead. It is in this period that some traditional offices of government like the *atābak* and the *wazīr* are declining in authority and respect and others such as the *dawādār* and the *ḥājib* are extending their authority. More important for our purposes, it is a period when the 'dynasty' and the 'system' are unstable and loyalty must be paid for rather generously. It is also a period when a lot of newly-acquired lands are coming into the hands of the sultan of Egypt, from the Crusaders and the Kurdish princelings of Syria. The land thereby acquired may be distributed to supporters of the regime, but given the unsettled situation in the area at that time (a product *inter alia* of Latin raiding, the Mongol invasions and of the Syrian revolts) there is no guarantee that lands distributed in *iqṭā'* will show a certain profit in any year. The Mamluk army was certainly well equipped to take lands from the Crusaders but it was a different matter to ensure their security and prosperity.

Moreover, throughout this period (although we lack detailed and systematic evidence on this subject) it seems clear that the most important Mamluk *iqṭā's* were in Syria and Palestine. Certainly there are many more references to them in the sources than there are to Egyptian *iqṭā's*. One point of some interest is that in the two crucial preliminary decades before the accession of the sultan Baybars in 1260, Baḥrī Mamluk *iqṭā's* were concentrated in Palestine. Plausibly this was an accident of chronology, though a revealing one. The Baḥrī Mamluk regiment was formed by al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb of Egypt in the years between 1240 and 1249, precisely at the time when lands were being retaken from the Franks of Palestine. Jerusalem was acquired by al-Ṣāliḥ in 642/1244-5 and its lands handed over in *iqṭā'* to the Khwarazmians for a brief period, then lost to another Muslim, then reoccupied in 645/1247-8.[7] The regions of Tiberias, Ascalon and Baysān among others, were reoccupied in the same period[8] and some of these new Palestinian *iqṭā's* must have been given to the Baḥrīs, for when Aqṭāy al-Jamdār was murdered in 652/1254, the Baḥrīs fled to al-Nāṣir Yūsuf the ruler of Damascus, and al-Nāṣir demanded from al-Mu'izz Aybak the formal cession of the Palestinian lands (the Sāḥil) where the Baḥrī fiefs had been, and reinvested Baḥrī *amīrs* with these *iqṭā's*.[9] Baybars, during this period of exile, held half of Nābulus and Jīnīn. Nābulus had been one of the regions acquired by al-Ṣālih Ayyūb in 644/1246-7 from the ruler of Damascus, al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl. Later Baybars and other Baḥrīs, on the pretext of visiting their *iqṭā's* in the areas of Nābulus and Gaza, deserted al-Nāṣir to join al-Mughīth, the ruler of al-Karak. Later still, in 657/1259, when al-Nāṣir had re-established his ascendancy in that area, the Baḥrīs returned to his service and Baybars was reconfirmed in his tenure of half Nābulus and Jīnīn.[10] There seems to be an implication in the chronicler's accounts of the above events that some *iqṭā's* implied some sort of *de facto* control of the lands

in question, possibly they were administrative *iqṭā's* on the Seljuk model. Ṣarkhad was also held as an administrative *iqṭā'* under al-Nāṣir. But not all of Muslim Palestine was held by Baḥrīs. Jerusalem for instance, in 655/1256-7 was the *iqṭā'* of a certain Sayf al-Dīn Kabak (or Aybak) and from the context of the references to this *muqṭa'* it is clear that he had considerable control of the town and its region and was not simply the recipient of some of its revenue. He was in fact its *nā'ib* or *wālī* (governor).[11] *Iqṭā's* comprising the whole or part of a Palestinian town were obviously exceptional but we know from Ibn Abd al-Ẓāhir's chronicle that other Baḥrī *iqṭā's* were concentrated in the Gaza-*Sāḥil* area,[12] although Gaza itself was under a *wālī*. A further implication to be gleaned from the sources was that while Sayf al-Dīn Kabak seems to have resided on his *iqṭā'* at Jerusalem, it was more normal not to do so, but that there was nothing unusual in an *amīr* asking and getting permission *(dustūr)* to visit his *iqṭā'*. When one considers the prestige of the Baḥrīs in the period, the presumption must be that *iqṭā's* in the hinterland of Palestine were elite *iqṭā's*.

To a very large extent these observations remain true for the reigns of Quṭuz (657-8/1259-60) and Baybars (658-76/1260-77), that is that Palestinian *iqṭā'* is frequently referred to, it is highly coveted and we find instances of administrative *iqṭā'* co-existing with the more conventional fiscal *iqṭā'* in the same area. For instance, Nābulus (Baybars' former *iqṭā'*) remained a plum *iqṭā'* in this period. It was given to a very influential figure, Shams al-Din Āqūsh al-Burlī when Quṭuz made him *nā'ib* (governor) over Gaza and the coastal provinces. Later Baybars confirmed him in it and added Baysān to it. Later still after Āqūsh's downfall, a highly-valued *Wāfidī* (immigrant) *amīr*, Sayf al-Dīn Salār was given half the town as an *iqṭā'* of fifty (that is to say an *iqṭā'* which would be expected to produce fifty cavalrymen).[13] Equally Hebron during the reign of Baybars, had no *wālī*, as far as one can discover, but was assigned as *iqṭā' in toto* to the *nā'ibs* of al-Karak as a perquisite of office.[14]

One indication of the pressure from the *amīrs* to receive fiefs in Palestine from the sultan, is that when Baybars, early in his reign, in 661 1262-3 makes his first territorial gains from the Franks in the region of Nazareth and Mount Tabor he immediately grants these lands out in *iqṭā'*, and we must emphasise that it was an immediate distribution. As soon as Baybars had destroyed the church at Nazareth and abandoned his inconclusive foray against Acre, he summoned the *atābak* and the scribes of the chancery and had them sit up all night writing *manāshīr* (formal documents setting out the terms of the sultan's grant) and has the fifty-six documents in question distributed the next morning, together with other signs of royal favour. Doubtless it was necessary to purchase the loyalty of the *amīrs* before moving against al-Mughīth, the Ayyubid ruler at al-Karak.[15]

On the face of it there was an exact repeat performance of this emergency distribution of *iqṭā'* in 663/1264-5 in the area of Caesarea and Arsūf,[16] but on the face of it only. In 663/1264-5 the Mongols

had attacked al-Bīra, a Mamluk fortress on the Euphrates. Advance detachments of the Mamluk army in Egypt were sent north post-haste to relieve the fortress, while Baybars and the main body of the army advanced out of Egypt at a more leisurely pace. While Baybars was in southern Palestine he heard that the threat to al-Bīra was over, and he sensibly decided to use the large forces assembled under his command to attack the Frankish coastal cities. Casesarea was captured on 5 March and Arsūf was taken, probably, on 30 March. Both towns were destroyed to prevent their re-occupation by the Franks, but immediately this had been achieved, villages in the region were distributed among sixty *amīrs*. The general and formal preface to the charter in question and the lists of the names of the *amīrs* and of the names of the villages have been preserved in Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle, and many of the villages awarded in the document have been identified. The document and the related lists are of extraordinary interest. Among its many features of secondary interest we may single out the fact that most of the *amīrs* in the list of recipients can be identified, that the list follows an approximate order of seniority and political importance, that a number of *amīrs* who are mentioned by the chronicle as playing a prominent role in the two sieges are not on the list, while certain others are, including the army commanders at al-Bīra and the *nā'ibs* of Egypt, Damascus and al-Karak, although they were not on this expedition.

Among the sixty recipients on the list there were at least a dozen of the still very powerful Ṣāliḥī Baḥrī *amīrs*, though there were no less than eight of Baybars's own Ẓāhiri Mamluk *amīrs*. That is to say, the old guard, al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb's former Mamluks, are still prominent, but that even at this early stage in his reign, Baybars has lost no time in advancing his own Mamluks. But not all of those listed were Mamluk *amīrs*. Some, at least, were freeborn Kurdish *amīrs*, formerly in the employment of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf of Damascus, and many of them were Wāfidiyya, in particular Wāfidiyya from Bagdad. (Wāfidiyya is the term used to denote distinguished refugees coming into the Mamluk state and the service of the sultanate from beyond its frontiers.) The implication here and elsewhere in the chronicles of the period is that these immigrant notables were given a welcome and accorded an importance which they were not to enjoy under later sultans.[17] Among the office-bearers listed are the more prominent *nā'ibs*, the *atābak*, the *khazindār*, the *amīr silāḥ*, the two *silaḥdārs*, the *amīr jāndār* and his deputy the *amīr mihmandār* and the *ustādhdār*, but not the *amīr jamdār*, the *dawādār* nor either of the *ḥājibs*. This of course sheds some light on Mamluk ranking and which offices were considered not to be of great importance.

The chief feature of interest with respect to the villages granted is that none of them are actually on the coast. In particular, none of them is in the immediate vicinity of Arsūf.

But what has hitherto escaped emphasis by those who have studied this document is that the villages are not being distributed as *iqṭā'* at all. The document is quite explicit about this: they are being distributed as *mulk* (freehold tenure). That is to say,

what is being granted out is not an assignment of revenue held for a limited period dependent on office and service of the state, revocable at the whim of the sultan, but allodial property, the land itself, and this may also be passed on to one's heirs. As the preamble says:-

> 'He (the sultan) thought that he should prefer them (the *amīrs*) to himself, distributing over them the rays coming from the light of his sun, so as to leave to their sons and their sons' sons something which would last to the end of time and endure forever. Thus the sons could live on his favour as their fathers had done.'

The documents of the grants themselves are referred to by the chronicler as *al-tawāqī' bi'l-tamlīk* (diplomas of ownership).

The 663 distribution was in a sense a repeat performance of the largess in 661 but in a more extreme form. Baybars, in lavishly alienating in perpetuity the territories around Caesarea and Arsūf, was responding to pressure from the *amīrs*. According to al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-sulūk*, in doing so he was not acting thus from spontaneous generosity, but rather responding to a specific demand from the *amīrs* that he should do just this. Reading between the lines, and indeed in the lines of the inflated and conceited rhetoric of the preamble to the charter, I think we can discern two things. Firstly, as one can see from the passage quoted above, the Mamluk *amīrs* are worried about their future and about the future of their families. Some at least of them must have hoped that now that there was a Mamluk-controlled regime in power it might be possible to transmit their wealth and authority not to other Mamluks but to their own children. In the long run this hope was not to be fulfilled. On the other hand, the sultan Baybars himself clearly feels insecure, in particular about the theoretical basis of his right to rule. The charter's preamble suggests that his right rested partly on achievement, on his victories over the heathen Mongols and the infidel Franks. 'Fortune *(al-sa'da)* made him king.' In part it rested on his solicitude for his followers. 'He did not wish to be singled out from amongst them by receipt of a favour nor to enjoy by himself and appropriate exclusively a benefit won by their swords and obtained by their resolution. He thought that he would prefer them to himself.' The document hints at an almost contractual relationship between the sultan and his *amīrs*. This is a picture which the chroniclers' rather muddled accounts of Baybars's acclamation as sultan after the death of Quṭuz seem to confirm.[18]

In the later years of Baybars's reign after a series of successful purges of some of the more dangerous *amīrs* (among them Sanjar al-Ḥalabī and Āqūsh al-Muḥammadī) the balance shifted somewhat in the sultan's favour, but in the early years at least this dependent relationship with his Ṣāliḥī and Kurdish *amīrs* meant that there were bound to be anomalies in his distribution of the territories conquered in Syria and Palestine and in the operation of the *iqṭā'* system. Thus for instance the chronicles place great emphasis on the fact that when the *Amīr* Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qaymarī died, his

son was allowed to inherit his *iqṭā'* of one hundred. Equally when another Palestinian *amīr*, Shujā al-Dīn, the *wālī* of Sarmīn, disappeared on a mission to the Franks, his *iqṭā'* was transferred to his brothers.[19] When 'Izz al-Dīn al-Ḥillī died in 667/1268-9 his son inherited an *iqṭā'* of forty horsemen.[20] Interestingly enough, when Baybars did move in 661/1262-3 against a powerful rival, 'Izz al-Dīn al-Dimyāṭī, and removed him from his *iqṭā'*, he sought to weaken possible resistance to his coup by allowing Dimyāṭī's Mamluks to remain on the *iqṭā'*.[21] Nor was the assignment of freehold property at Caesarea and Arsūf an isolated occurrence. In 666/1267-8, Ṭaybars al-Wazīrī and Sanjar al-Ḥamawī were each given a village in Palestine probably in the area of Jaffa or Ludd,[22] and on another occasion 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Ḥājj al-Ruknī was given two villages in Palestine to retire to.[23] The same procedure of handing over a freehold tenure was followed when Sharaf al-Dīn b. Abi 'l Qāsim was placed on retirement.[24] Not only did the powerful rivals of the sultan have to be propitiated, but the resources of Baybars's own favoured Ẓāhirī Mamluks had to be strengthened. Thus his most trusted lieutenant, Badr al-Dīn Bīlīk al-Khazindār was given the castle of al-Ṣubayba and the town of Banyās to hold as *mulk*, and Bīlīk entered into a pact of homage with Baybars for it (an anomalous occurrence possibly inspired by the practice of Frankish knights).[25] Later on in the 690s/1290s the same area was given in *mulk* to Baydarā al-Ashrafī, a favourite of al-Malik al-Ashraf Khalīl b. Qalāwūn.[26] The situation was hardly more regular under Qalāwūn. In 680/1281-2 Qalāwūn came to terms with the rebel Shams al-Dīn Sunqur al-Ashqar and Sunqur was granted an amirate of six hundred cavalry including the *iqṭā's* of Afāmiya, Kafr Ṭāb, Antioch, al-Suwaydiyya, Bakās and Darkūsh. There can be no doubt in his case that '*iqṭā'*' is being used here not in any technical sense, but as a face-saving term denoting the *de facto* authority of Sunqur over a large area of northern Syria.[27]

Apart from the pressures to create special and irregular forms of tenure for rivals and supporters within the Mamluk state, a further source of anomalies was produced by the need to co-exist with the Franks. Instances of Frankish knights holding *iqṭā'* under the Mamluk sultans are by no means unknown. We have already noted the fact that while the hinterland of Arsūf and Caesarea was distributed as *mulk*, the coastal strip was not. Plausibly, I maintain, this was because the area remained in Frankish hands, albeit under Mamluk suzerainty. According to Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir: 'While Baybars was at Caesarea (in 663) some Franks came and offered their submission including a son of one of the princes. Baybars gave them *iqṭā'* and treated them favourably.' The phrasing of Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir hardly allows any doubt that it is *iqṭā'* and not treaty negotiations which are being referred to here. If treaty negotiations had been in question, Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir would certainly have known of it for it would almost certainly have been he or, if not he, then one of his colleagues in the chancery who would have had the responsibility of drafting any truce document. If there were any doubt however, a quite independent reference in an appendix of 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād's life of Baybars should dispel it. The appendix in Ibn

I

Shaddād deals with those people who came into the sultan's service from outside the frontiers of his realm (i.e. Wāfidiyya). It consists largely of lists of émigrés from the Mongols, from Anatolia, from Bagdad and elsewhere, but there is a brief section on the Franks. In it Ibn Shaddād remarks:

> 'There came a *wafd* [a delegation seeking protection] to sultan [lacuna] from Ṣafad as well as the son of the lord of Arsūf and three hundred horsemen. They took Islam at Baybars's hand and he put them in the victorious *ḥalqa* and gave them excellent *iqṭā's* of the *ajnād* [soldiers of the *ḥalqa*].'[28]

If Ibn Shaddād and Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir are to be believed then, shortly before the Hospitallers were to lose Arsūf, a son of its former lord, John III, entered Baybars's service and was enfeoffed (presumably with the old Ibelin lands shortly to be occupied on the coast of Arsūf and Caesarea) and this relationship was formalised by being described as *iqṭā'* in the *ḥalqa*.

A vague precedent for this sort of arrangement may be found in the confrontation between John of Jaffa and Baybars in 661/1262-3 when instead of the normal procedures being observed for a treaty negotiation between formal equals, John of Jaffa submitted to the sultan and prostrated himself before him. He was then confirmed in his possession of the town by a *manshūr* document: the term *manshūr* is used among other things for charters granting *iqṭā'*, while the normal term for a treaty or truce document was a *hudna*.[29]

Apart from the case of Arsūf and the more ambiguous proceedings at Jaffa, there are two further cases known where Franks received *iqṭā'* from the Mamluks. First, after the fall of Ṣafad to Baybars in 664/1266 one of its knights apostatised and was given *iqṭā'*.[30] Secondly, after the fall of Tripoli in 688/1289 the sultan Qalāwūn gave the son of his old ally Guy Embriaco the town of Jubayl to hold in *iqṭā'*.[31] Parenthetically it should be pointed out that there are no certain cases in this period of the reverse procedure, of Muslims holding fiefs from Franks. There are two cases, cited in Jonathan Riley-Smith's *The feudal nobility and the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, 1174-1277* of feudatories with partially Arab names, but these were probably Syrian Christians - or even Franks who had acquired Arab nicknames.[32] Although the Buhturid *amīrs* in the Gharb region of the Lebanon were certainly either Druzes or orthodox Muslims and copies of grants of fiefs to them by the Franks in 1255 and 1280 are given in Ṣāliḥ b. Yaḥyā's *Ta'rīkh Bayrūt*, all the documents this chronicle provides us with for this period dealing with grants of *iqṭā'* or fief contain so many glaring anomalies in dates and individuals referred to, and in their diplomatic that they were probably forged.[33]

A more common form of accommodation between Mamluk and Frank than the unusual cases discussed above was the partition treaty in which a certain designated area on their frontiers was left intact as a territorial unit, but its revenues were divided between the Mamluks and Frankish lords. Such treaties were concluded with the

sultans for instance, by the Hospitallers of Margat (al-Marqab) in 655/1266-7, Cursat (al-Quṣayr) in 666/1268, Tortosa in 669/1271, Margat in 669/1271, Tripoli in 669/1271, Tyre in 669/1271, Tripoli in 680/1281, Acre in 683/1283, and Tyre in 684/1285. That of Tyre in 669/1271 is of particular interest for we have a subsequent document on the Frankish side discussing the necessity for arbitration over certain *casaux* (estates) and *gastines* (totally or partially abandoned land) and whether they fell under the partition.[34] The document implies that on the Muslim side it is the holders of *iqṭā'* who collect the revenue (in this case *muqṭa's* based on the Mamluk centre of government at Ṣafad). If the *muqṭa's* kept the revenue they collected (and this is not known) the presumption would be that in some areas at least, the revenues provided by an *iqṭā'* were identical with the traditional seigneurial revenues the Franks were accustomed to levy.

The nature of the revenues that a Mamluk or anyone else would normally collect from an *iqṭā'* is very far from clear. Rabie says that the conferment of *iqṭā'* gave the right to collect a limited number of taxes only, but he fails, I think, to identify convincing sources of regular revenue - he mentions the *marā'ī* tax (a tax on livestock going back to the ninth century) and the *hilābī* tax (an annual tax for licensing bakeries, shops etc.),[35] but there is no evidence that these were levied in thirteenth-century Syria. There are references to taxes on beer, wine and prostitutes which were collected in the thirteenth century by *muqṭa's*, and which were abolished by Baybars, but it seems unlikely to me at least that the armies of medieval Egypt and Syria were maintained wholly or largely on immoral earnings. A base tax on agricultural produce must be a necessity for a workable *iqṭā'* system.

Claude Cahen suggested that the *muqṭa'* collected *kharāj* but not *jizya*,[36] yet setting aside the *kharāj al-rātib* (the tax on orchards and vineyards) which was collected in this period, *kharāj* is employed very rarely and only vaguely in this period as a generic term meaning taxation. If *kharāj* was the main source of *iqṭā'* revenue, then it will have been paid in kind, and it will have been difficult for example for a Mamluk *amīr* employed in Egypt but holding Syrian *iqṭā'* to collect it or to convert into money. Moreover Gibb argued that in the early Ayyubid period during the rule of Saladin, when *kharāj* was collected on crops in Egypt, it was collected by the *muqṭa'* but forwarded by him to the state.[37]

So far we have confined ourselves to the examples of anomalies in the *iqṭā'* system of which there are an enormous number in this period. It remains to sketch in the more normal pattern of occupation. When a major Frankish castle or centre of government was taken, if it was not preventively destroyed, then large numbers of Royal Mamluks and other elite troops were moved in to garrison it. When Ṣafad was taken in 664/1266, fifty-four of Baybars's own Mamluks were moved in to occupy it. Both they and the *ajnad* were given *iqṭā'* in the region.[38] When Margat was taken in 684/1285, one hundred and fifty *ṭablkhānāh amīrs*, (that is *amīrs* of forty horsemen) and other *amīrs* were installed there together with specialist forces, and a large area including Kafr Ṭāb, Antioch

and Latakia was set aside to provide for its garrison.[39] The port of Tripoli was destroyed in 688/1289 but subsequently ten *ṭablkhānāh amīrs* and fifteen *amīrs* of ten were posted in the area and given *iqṭā's* there.[40] Acre also was destroyed and the region governed from Ṣafad, but a number of lesser Mamluk and non-Mamluk *amīrs* were given *iqṭā's* in the environs.[41]

Beyond the environs of major strongholds, most of the *iqṭā'* in Syria and Palestine, like most of the minor posts in local government were held by the *ḥalqa*. In particular this was true of areas like Ba'labakk and al-Karak which had remained uninterruptedly in Muslim hands throughout the thirteenth century. Professor Ayalon in his 'Studies in the structure of the Mamluke Army' has singled out two elements in the *ḥalqa*; firstly the Wāfidiyya (to whom reference has already been made in this paper) and secondly, the *awlād al-nās* (literally, 'sons of the people', in fact sons of Mamluks who were given low-grade non-Mamluk commands and *iqṭā's*).[42] I feel that it needs to be emphasised that the *ḥalqa* in this period was not solely comprised of these elements. Rather, as Poliak recognised, the term '*ḥalqa*' or '*ajnād al-ḥalqa*' (troops of the *ḥalqa*) is used to refer to all those soldiers in the service of the sultan who are neither Mamluk in origin, nor auxiliary troops like the irregular and occasional forces provided usually by the Arabs and Turcomans. In fact the *ḥalqa* in the late thirteenth century was probably the largest single element in the armies of the sultans. At the battle of Ḥimṣ (680/1281), for instance, they numbered at least four thousand.[43] All of the *ḥalqa* were freeborn. Some of them were *amīrs* or were in the service of *ḥalqa amīrs*. Particularly prominent among the *ḥalqa* at this time were the Qaymarī Kurdish *amīrs* and certain local dignitaries in Palestine including among them men like 'Imād al-Dīn b. Abi' l-Qāsim, Kamāl al-Dīn b. Shīth and Jamāl al-Dīn b. Nahār. A study of the names and careers of men like these reveals that they were not Wāfidiyya or *awlād al-nās*, but they were in the service of the Mamluk government in Palestine and held or received *iqṭā's* there. It is likely that the term *mufradī* (pl. *mafārida*) is the term occasionally used to designate *ḥalqa amīrs*.

Some of the Turcoman tribes in Palestine were also included in the *ḥalqa*, not in the sense of being subsumed in the *ḥalqa* on campaign, but in the sense that they received *ḥalqa iqṭā's*. They often performed patrol duties on the coasts of Syria and Palestine, and in such cases it is perfectly clear that the tenure of land in *iqṭā'* included the right to pasture one's flocks on it.[44]

Others of the *ajnād al-ḥalqa* who were not *amīrs* were maintained by and in the service of Mamluk *amīrs*. If we follow the career of a royal Mamluk, for instance Baybars al-Dawādār al-Manṣūrī, it is clear that as he moved from post to post his *iqṭā'* was changed.[45] Clearly the *amīr*'s own Mamluks followed the *amīr* to each new posting for otherwise there could be no continuity in training and in group loyalty to the master *(khushdāshiyya)* but the bulk of his levies from an *iqṭā'* were freeborn cavalrymen *(ajnād al-ḥalqa)* who would be transferred from master to master rather than from estate to estate. From Baybars al-Manṣūrī's account of his career it

emerges incidentally that although he was already campaigning as an *amīr* of five in 663/1264-5, he was maintained by pay *(jāmakiyya)* and he was not given an *iqṭā'* or any portion of one by his *ustādh* (master), Qalāwūn, until 671/1272-3. Very likely most *iqṭā'* in Syria was held by the *ḥalqa*. *Iqṭā'* was used to maintain and reward Mamluk *amīrs* if they were employed on garrison duty in the provinces, but otherwise it does not seem to have had much importance for them save to indicate status. The inner ring of *amīrs* were so busily employed on state business that they can rarely have visited their *iqṭā'* estates and were so generously rewarded in other ways that they can have had little inclination to do so. What revenues they were allowed to collect from these estates is, as we have seen, open to speculation.

If the revenue an *iqṭā'* could supply a Mamluk was uncertain, it certainly provided no basis for the establishment of decentralized authorities and provincial loyalties that they could call upon. The two great revolts of the thirteenth century, by Sanjar al-Ḥalabī in 658/1260 and by Sunqur al-Ashqar in 678/1280, were launched by *amīrs* whose power-base lay not in their *iqṭā's* and their own Mamluks and *ajnād*, but in the office they both held, the *niyāba* of Damascus, and in the support of other Syrian officials. *Iqṭā'* was of much greater significance for the *amīrs* of the *ḥalqa*, where the grant of *iqṭā'* was often the formal acknowledgement by the central government that the recipient was the local power in the area and a confirmation of the latter's traditional standing there.[46]

Further we must not forget that much of Syria and Palestine was neither Mamluk *iqṭā'* nor *mulk* nor *ḥalqa iqṭā'*. Much land was held under *waqf*, a form of settlement of property used to endow trusts for religious and charitable purposes. This of course particularly applies to Palestine. There had always been extensive *waqfs* to support various institutions in Jerusalem. When Jaffa was taken by Baybars in 666/1268 much of its land was made into *waqf* and the same thing happened after the capture of Shaqīf Arnūn (Beaufort) and Acre.[47] In 660/1262 Baybars had actually converted some of the land held around Hebron as *iqṭā'* back to its former status as *waqf*.[48]

There are no broad and simple conclusions. Thirteenth-century Syria and Palestine were not like that. The original meaning of the word *iqṭā'* assigned to it by the Arab lexicographers is 'portion' and it is often used in the sources to mean something no more precise than that. *Iqṭā'* was used as a means of maintaining garrisons, as a mark of status, as a formal approval of a local notability, as a recognition of *de facto* political authority, as a loose equivalent of the term *wilāya*, and very likely even to designate Frankish fief tenure under Muslim suzerainty. Not all Mamluk *amīrs* held *iqṭā'*, not all land was under *iqṭā'*. After the accession of the sultan Baybars until the early decades of the fourteenth century (when *iqṭā'* was systematised in Egypt by the great cadastral surveys) the role of *iqṭā'* in the formation of the Mamluk system of government was probably quite small. Its main role seems to have been to maintain *amīrs* and soldiers who were not Mamluks. It did so by

providing revenues, about the precise nature of which I, at least,am still very uncertain.

It may be felt that to some extent the fragmentary nature of the conclusions reached in this paper are a product of the severely restricted time-span considered, but it seems to me to be a very dangerous assumption that there is substantial continuity in Syrian institutions from Saladin to Baybars al-Bunduqdārī and further to the last days of the Circassian sultans - that the Islamic world in the Middle Ages was in some sense more monolithic and more resistant to change than its Christian neighbour.

This brings me to my penultimate observation - that it is as yet too early to attempt a useful, still less a definitive comparison between feudalism in the thirteenth-century kingdom of Jerusalem and the so-called system of *iqṭā'* in Ayyubid or Mamluk Syria. With regard to the problem of Islamic feudalism, the two poles of opinion are well represented by A. N. Poliak and by Claude Cahen. Poliak wrote of Muslim 'knights', their 'fiefs' and their seigneurial rights. Cahen has since denied the validity of this terminology, arguing that the state had ultimate control of the *iqṭā's*, that the tenure of an *iqṭā'* was in no sense contractual or dependent on a pact and that the holders of *iqṭā'* were a town-dwelling elite with little if any interest in the administration of their so-called 'fiefs'.

My own feeling is that the epithet 'feudal' cannot be decisively ruled out of court yet. As the researches of Joshua Prawer and Jonathan Riley-Smith have shown, the knights of the kingdom of Jerusalem tended to belong to a town-dwelling elite too. As this paper has suggested, there were occasionally contractual elements in thirteenth-century Muslim land-tenure, and some *amīrs* did reside on their *iqṭā's*, either because they were *ḥalqa amīrs*, or because, as at Nābulus or at al-Subayba, they were Mamluk *amīrs* exercising *de facto* authority over that territory.

In this study use of the chancery encyclopaedists has been avoided. The vast bureaucratic and meritocratic system that al-Qalqashandī so ponderously elaborated in *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā* barely existed in the thirteenth century. In this context *Ṣubḥ al-a'sha* reminds one of Borges's Chinese encyclopaedia in which animals are divided 'a) those that belong to the Emperor, b) embalmed ones, c) those that are trained, d) suckling pigs, e) mermaids, f) fabulous ones, g) stray dogs, h) those that are included in this classification, etc.'[49] Al-Qalqashandī's classifications are simply not useful. One suspects that he found the early history of the Baḥrī Mamluk sultanate as difficult to understand as we do.

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16. On this episode, see *Zubda*, ff. 70a-71b; *Dhayl*, II, 318; Ibn ad-Dawādārī, VIII, 108-14; *Ayyubids*; I, 98-104, II, 78-82, 208-210, 249; F. M. Abel, 'La liste des donations de Baibars en Palestine d'après la charte de 663 H. (1265)', *JPOS*, XIX, 1939, 38-44. It is probable that the original source for all the Arabic chronicles for this episode was Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *al-Rawḍ al-zāhir*, but the relevant passage does not seem to have survived.

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24. *Dhayl*, I, 318.

25. *Rawḍ*, Sadeque, 111, Fatih, f. 9b (Khowayter, II, 366-7); *A'lāq*, III, 144; *Dhayl*, I, 452-3; II, 107; III, 263; IV, 106; Ibn al-Furāt, VII, 93.

26. A. Moberg, *Ur 'Abd allāh Ibn 'Abd eẓ-Ẓâhir's Biografi över Sultanen el-Melik el-Aśraf Ḫalīl*, Lund, 1902, 29-39.

27. *A'lāq*, f. 92b; *Sulūk*, I, iii, 687: *Nujūm*, VII, 301.

28. *Rawḍ*, Fatih, f. 71a (Khowayter, III, 1058); *Rawḍa*, f. 246a; *Ayyubids*, I, 90; II, 72; *Sulūk*, I, ii, 528.

29. *Rawḍ*, Sadeque, 139 (Khowayter, II, 407); *Zubda*, ff. 48b-49a; *Ayyubids*, I, 52-3; II, 43-4; al-'Aynī, *'Iqd al-jumān*, in *RHC, Hist. or.*, II, 216-7.

30. *Rawḍ*, Fatih, f. 85b (Khowayter, III, 1082); *Sulūk*, I, ii, 547.

31. Ibn al-Furāt, VIII, 80.

32. Jonathan (S. C.) Riley-Smith, *The feudal nobility and the kingdom of Jerusalem*, London, 1973, 10.

33. This problem is too complex to be more than noted here, but the relevant documents may be found in Ṣāliḥ b. Yaḥyā, *Tārīḫ Bayrūt* (edd. Francis Hours and Kamal (S.) Salibi), Beirut, 1969, Kamal S. Salibi, *Maronite historians of medieval Lebanon*, Beirut, 1959; C. Clermont-Ganneau, 'Deux chartes des croisés dans les archives arabes', *RAO*, VI, 1903-5, 1-20.

34. *Rawḍ*, Fatih, f. 153a (Khowayter, III, 1196); G. L. Fr. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur ältesten Handels - und Staats-geschichte der Republik Venedig*, III, Vienna, 1856-7 (repr. Amsterdam, 1964), 398-400; J. Richard, 'Un partage de seigneurie entre Francs et Mamlouks', *Syria*, XXX, 1953, 72-82.

35. Rabie, 41.

36. Cl. Cahen IḲṬĀ', *EI2*.

37. H.A.R. Gibb, 'The armies of Saladin' in *Studies on the civilization of Islam*, Boston (Mass.), 1962, at p.75.

38. *A'lāq*, III, 150; *Nujūm*, VII, 139; *Dhayl*, II, 343.

39. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa'l-'uṣūr fī sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr* (ed. Murād Kāmil), Cairo, 1961, 80-1.

40. Ibn al-Furāt, VIII, 90; Ṣāliḥ b. Yaḥyā, *Tārīḫ Bayrūt*, 71-2.

41. Ibn al-Dawādārī, VIII, 313.

42. D. Ayalon, 'Studies on the structure of the Mamluk army', II, *BSOAS*, XV, 1953, 448-51.

43. *Sulūk*, I, iii, 693.

44. *Rawḍa*, f. 241a.

45. On the early stages of Baybars al-Manṣūrī's career, see *Zubda*, ff. 69b-70a, 78a, 151b-152b, 154a, 157a-b; E. Ashtor, 'Étude sur quelques chroniques mamloukes', *Israel Oriental Studies*, I, Tel Aviv, 1971, 272-7.

46. For an instance of a non-Mamluk local man holding such *iqṭā'*, see Ibn al-Furāt, VIII, 2.

47. *Rawḍ*, Fatih, ff. 102b, 105b (Khowayter, III, 110, 114); *Rawḍa*, ff. 193b-195a, 257a-270b; Ibn al-Furāt, VIII, 121-2; *Nujūm*, VII, 121; Mujīr al-Dīn, *Kitāb al-uns al-jalīl bi ta'rīkh al-Quds wa'l-Khalīl*, Cairo, A.H. 1283, 433-5; E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la croisade*, Paris, 1968, 173.

48. *Rawḍ*, Sadeque, 114 (Khowayter, II, 371); *Sulūk*, I, ii, 445.

49. J. L. Borges, *Other inquisitions*, New York, 1966, 108.

II

THE SUPPLY OF MONEY AND THE DIRECTION OF TRADE IN THIRTEENTH-CENTURY SYRIA

During the twelfth century and the early decades of the thirteenth the ports held by the crusaders on the Syrian and Palestinian coastline flourished commercially.[1] To a considerable extent their prosperity was based on their role as outlets for merchandise coming from the great cities of the Syrian hinterland (Damascus, Aleppo, Hama and Homs). Caravans from Damascus and Aleppo brought not only Syrian produce to the crusader littoral but also merchandise, much of it luxury goods, from Iraq, Anatolia, Iran and the Indies. Muslim merchants brought their goods to such ports as Acre, Tyre, Tripoli, Lattakia, Beirut and Jaffa. Italian and other western merchants purchased these goods and took them across the Mediterranean to sell in Europe.

In the period c. 1240-90, however, the degree to which these Frankish coastal cities depended for their prosperity on their role as ports of transit for merchandise coming from or via the Muslim cities of the hinterland was relatively slight. Nevertheless the ports remained prosperous and the interest in them of the merchant communities of Venice, Genoa and Pisa and of their southern French and Spanish competitors does not seem to have diminished until the very end.

The change in the relationship between coast and hinterland and the possible reasons for the continuing economic vitality of the coastal ports must now be examined.

Almost certainly the most important factor behind the shifting of Near Eastern trade routes and therefore in the commercial activities of the Latins in the Levant was the westward advance of the Mongol armies. The indirect effects of Mongol movements were felt in Syria long before the actual arrival of the Mongol armies before the walls of Aleppo in 1259. In the 1230s and 40s Mongol campaigns in central Asia and Anatolia led to the displacement of tribes and bands of Khwarizmian Turks, Turkomans and Kurds. Large contingents of these peoples, fleeing westwards and southwards before the Mongols, started to arrive in Syria, and as early as 1240 a Khwarizmian army threatened Aleppo.[2] In Syria such bands found employment in the cavalry of the Ayyubid princes or made a living from nomadic pastoralism or brigandage. In many cases all three activities were doubtless combined.

The disruption that the arrival of these nomadic warbands brought to settled life and commerce is well attested in the sources. Though the power of the Khwarizmians was broken at the battle of Gaza (1244), the massive influx of Turkomans into northern Syria in the late 1240s was to have more

important long-term implications.[3] Latin sources record the damage done by Turkoman devastations of the northern principalities in 1247, 1250, 1252 and 1255.[4] The Turkomans moved into Palestine too, for Frankish raiding parties encountered them and large herds of cattle in the area of Beysan in 1249 and in the area of Tiberias in 1260.[5] Looking back on the reign of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf (the Ayyubid ruler of Damascus, Aleppo, Ba'labakk and much of Palestine until the Mongol invasion of 1259), Abu' l-Fidā observed that in his reign 'the roads became unsafe because of brigandage and it was impossible to travel from Damascus to Hama or elsewhere without a military escort and the mischief of the Arabs and Turkomans increased.'[6] Shahrazuri Kurds also moved into Palestine in the 1250s and eventually settled with their herds in the Gaza region.[7] The influx of Kurdish and Turkoman nomads into Palestine seems to heve encouraged a resurgence of Arab nomadism in the same area. Al-Nāṣir Yūsuf seems to have been utterly incapable of imposing the rule of law on the Bedouin. There were recurrent tensions between the Bedouin and the subsequent Mamlūk regime—tensions which exploded in a Bedouin revolt in 680/1281 and the sacking of Gaza and Nablus.[8] The Franks for their part were forced to abandon the agricultural colonies they had established on the plains of Galilee in the 1250s, and their subsequent raids into the Muslim hinterland were little more than cattle-stealing expeditions. Generally it seems likely that in the late thirteenth-century hinterland of Palestine and Syria there was a shift away from settled agriculture in favour of pastoralism (though this process is difficult to trace due to the urban bias of the sources of the period).

Most of the Syrian towns were occupied and sacked during the Mongol invasions of 1259-61. Thereafter Damascus seems to have made a full recovery—its prosperity being based to a considerable extent on the profits to be made from being the political capital and military centre of the Mamlūks in Syria and from its central role in the internal trade of Muslim Syria.[9] Other towns, however, did not recover. In Palestine, for example, a Jewish letter of 1267 described the town of Jerusalem as being grossly underpopulated as a result of the Mongol invasions.[10]

More importantly, in northern Syria Aleppo, which had experienced its heyday as a centre for international commerce in the early thirteenth century, was not able to imitate the resilience of Damascus. In the early thirteenth century the Venetians had negotiated a series of treaties with Aleppo's Ayyubid rulers which allowed the Venetians commercial concessions and a funduq in Aleppo. The last such agreement was negotiated with al-Nāṣir Yūsuf in 1254.[11] Thereafter there are no signs of any Western commercial presence in the city at all until the fourteenth century. Unlike Damascus, Aleppo was occupied by the Mongols twice in the period 1259-61 and again in 1280. Unlike Damascus, its walls and fortifications were not restored until the 1290s and, as Lapidus has put it, 'Aleppo remained without the stimulus of investment, construction or trade and production which eased the hardships of the age for Damascus'.[12] Ibn Shaddād's topography provides a wealth of evidence on depopulation, abandoned towns and pastoralist settlement in northern Syria in the 1260s and 70s.[13]

Of course the damage from the Mongol occupations could have been repaired. The real damage done by the Mongol appearance in the Near East stemmed from the nomadic influx referred to above and from two further factors; firstly the displacement of populations of towns under threat from the Mongols and secondly the closing of the frontiers between Syria and Iraq to peaceful commerce. The economic importance of refugees in this period should not be underestimated. People fled from the towns of Syria to Egypt or the Crusader principalities, and from the countryside to the towns. In many cases the displacements of population thus effected were permanent.[14]

In the first half of the thirteenth century much of the merchandise which Aleppo sent on to the West had presumably come overland to Aleppo from Mosul. Mosul was sacked by the Mongols in 660/1261. Even before then it must have experienced some disruption of its long-distance commerce.[15] Though it recovered subsequently (as Marco Polo's narrative indicates)[16] its recovery may have been hampered by the emigration of large numbers of Mosulīs into Syria and Egypt. Mosulī artificers were indeed to make a major contribution to Mamlūk arts and industry.[17]

Here we may parenthetially observe that the merchant 'Musauci Mosulini' referred to in a Latin commercial document of 1268 as resident in Acre may have resided there, not as the representative of some Mosulī based trading enterprise, but as a refugee who had restarted his business in the kingdom of Jerusalem. A similar observation applies to the Confraternity of Mosserins known to have existed in Acre in the late thirteenth century. Jean Richard believed that the membership of this confraternity would have been drawn from representatives of Mosulī commerce at their Acre branch. A subsequent study by Jonathan Riley-Smith has convincingly argued that the confraternities, including the Confraternity of Mosserins, should be seen as (evidently Christian) lay crusading brotherhoods affiliated to the great Military Orders. Now a fighting brotherhood recruited from Nestorian merchants from Mosul temporarily resident in Acre is an improbable beast. It is surely more likely that the brotherhood was formed by Christians permanently in exile from their homeland in Iraq. We have no evidence as to whether these 'Mosserins' engaged in trade or were artisans.[18]

Certainly other Arab Christians took refuge in the Crusader principalities, at least temporarily, during the Mongol invasion of Syria. Al-Makīn ibn al-'Amīd, a Christian employed in al-Nāṣir Yūsuf's chancery until 658/1260, then fled to Tyre. He stayed there five months and reported that many Christians from Damascus had done the same.[19] (As we shall see subsequently this phenomenon may have some bearing on the monetary crisis in Damascus later in the same year.) In the same year the Mongols levied a tax of a dinar per head on those inside Antioch. The tax is reported to have produced a hundred thousand dinars. As an estimate of the normal population of Antioch the figure of a hundred thousand would be preposterous, but as an estimate for a city temporarily swollen by refugees there is nothing implausible about it.[20]

A general effect of the flight of people from the countryside to the cities was to force food prices up in the short run and, in the long run, to make it likely that the harvest in the following year would be a very poor one.

There is no need here to linger over the other result of the Mongol invasion—the closing of the frontier to commerce between Syria and Iraq from the 1260s onwards. In 681/1282-3 the Mongol Ilkhan Aḥmad made proposals and indeed claimed to have taken a one-sided initiative in opening the frontier to trade, but his proposals were regarded with suspicion by the Mamlūk Sultan Qalāwūn. Aḥmad was murdered in 1284 and nothing came of this initiative. It is not until the very end of the thirteenth century that we have convincing evidence for a direct overland route for trade from the Ilkhanate into the Mamlūk Empire in the careers of merchants like al-Sawāmilī and in the diplomacy of the Ilkhan Ghazan.[21]

In the north west the Christian kingdom of Cilician Armenia entered into an alliance with the Mongols while much of Anatolia came under Mongol protection or occupation. Now the so-called 'alum of Aleppo' was actually mined Anatolia and in the early thirteenth century marketed through Aleppo.[22] In the late thirteenth century the 'alum of Aleppo' is in fact more likely to have reached Europe through the ports of Cilician Armenia.

The Mongol invasions had the effect of isolating Syria from its northern and eastern neighbours—at least as far as an overland trade was concerned.

Some commerce must have come into Syria overland from Egypt though there is disturbingly little evidence for it. As Ayalon has noted, the Mamlūk barīd (postal) route was not suitable for merchants[23] and though khans were built in Palestine in this period they were expressly intended for the use of Muslim pilgrims proceeding to Jerusalem or Hebron.[24] Though we hear of Franks plundering livestock we do not hear of them plundering caravans. A caravan proceeding from Egypt to Damascus would be obliged either to follow a coastal route through southern Palestine, through an area either dominated by or actually occupied by the Franks, or to travel east of the Dead Sea through the Transjordan. Certainly, as far as goods destined for Western markets were concerned, it would have been much cheaper to send these to Alexandria or Damietta on the Nile Delta. Egypt and Syria did not form one commercial market: their divergent monetary histories alone would suggest that.

It is difficult even to guess whether the bulk of Italian commerce in the thirteenth-century Levant was with Syria or with Egypt. Certainly Genoa's commercial interest in Egypt in the early thirteenth century and up to c. 1260 seems to have been relatively slight.[25] But undue reliance on the large number of Genoese notarial acts from the early 1250s that have survived and been published may produce a misleading impression here. The Genoese were heavily involved in Louis IX's crusade to Egypt from its earliest stages. After the Egyptian débâcle, Louis IX and his followers spent the years 1250-4 in Palestine. For Genoese merchants to have resumed trading with Egypt then would have been not only tactless but also bad business. There were profits to be made from providing supplies and financial services to the French king and his army in Palestine; Louis IX was to spend over a million pounds there.[26] Moreover the political situation in Egypt at that time was exceptionally disturbed and in 650/1253 the port of Alexandria was handed over as an iqṭā' (that is, very loosely speaking, a fief) to the disorderly mamlūk emir, Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy al-Jamdār.[27]

Some years later Genoa must have resumed trading with the Mamlūks. There were Genoese embassies to the Mamlūk Sultans in 1263, 1275 and 1285.[28] Egypt features frequently as the destination of merchants in the Genoese notarial acts witnessed in Ayas in the 1270s.[29] In 1289 the Sultan Qalāwūn seized Genoese merchants and property in Alexandria. In 1290 a new commercial agreement was drawn up to regulate affairs between Mamlūk Egypt and Genoa.[30] Venice and Pisa both traded with Egypt in the early thirteenth century. There were commercial agreements between Venice and Egypt in 1238 and 1254 and between Pisa and Egypt in 1208 and 1215-16.[31]

The Italians were not restricted to the ports of the Nile Delta, but, as emerges from the clauses of some of these agreements, could travel freely down to Cairo.[32] Though, as has already been mentioned, there was a Venetian commercial colony in Aleppo in the first half of the thirteenth century, there is little other evidence that western merchants journeyed into the hinterland of Muslim Syria. In 638/1240-1 Sālih Ismā'īl allowed Franks to come to Damascus to purchase arms,[33] and in 1288 Qalāwūn guaranteed the security of Venetian merchants in Syria.[34] Although there was obviously a great deal of commerce between the Christian coastline and the Muslim hinterland in Syria, its nature is difficult to determine from Italian commercial treaties and notarial documents. Western archives are rich in documentation on trade with the Levant, but it is often difficult to be sure of the ultimate destination of goods listed in contracts as due to be despatched to the Levant—whether 'Oltramare' will refer only to the Crusader ports on the Syrian coast or to ports in Cyprus, Cilician Armenia and Egypt as well, and whether, when Acre is marked as the ship's ultimate destination, the goods to be sold there were for the consumption of the settlers on the coast or for further export to the interior. Even when Acre or Tripoli or Beirut is given as the ship's destination, it is unlikely that it was the ship's only important port of call and this makes it very difficult for us to follow the potentially complex exchange of goods that may have taken place between Genoa, Acre and Alexandria. The Pisan and Venetian merchants (whom we know of from a petition to al-'Ādil in 1207) and who, sailing from Beirut, stopped off at Cyprus before proceeding to Alexandria with a cargo mostly of fish, were not in my opinion exceptional.[35]

In what follows, therefore, I have decided to rely mainly on information from local sources, much of it in Arabic. It is likely that much of the commerce of the Levant in the thirteenth century, as in earlier and later periods, was not in luxury goods, but in such basic staples as grain. It is unfortunate therefore that one tends to find evidence about the grain trade and its direction only in years of famine and crisis. In 1244, 1279 and 1282 the Hospitallers wrote to the West appealing for grain to supplement their supplies in a time of famine.[36] In 1244 and 1282 the famines must have been caused or exacerbated by the devastations of the Khwarizmians and the Mongols respectively. Joseph de Cauncy's letter of 1282 implies that until the War of the Sicilian Vespers, the Franks in Syria had been importing grain from Angevin Sicily.[37]

Clearly it is possible that not all the grain purchased in Sicily was consumed by the Franks of the coastal principalities and that some of it was sold

in the Syrian interior. Evidence from the late 1250s and early 60s certainly shows the interior as dependent upon grain grown in Egypt and imported into Syria through the Palestinian ports and upon grain grown by the Franks themselves in Palestine. Thus in 659/1261 Baybars and his emirs were bringing grain by boat from Damietta to Jaffa. Another consignment of grain was unloaded at Gaza and then presumably brought overland up the coastal plain. While Baybars was in Palestine that year he negotiated a series of treaties with Jaffa, Acre and Beirut. According to the chronicler Ibn al-Furāt the reason the sultan allowed the Franks a breathing space 'was that prices were high and the bulk of their [i.e. the Muslims'] imports were coming from the Frankish lands'. As a result of these treaties, 'The roads then became safe and there was an increase in imports (jalāb).'

Some of the best crop-growing land lay on the coastal plain between Ascalon and Caesarea. It was for this reason that in 662/1264 the Mamlūk governor of Palestine sought and got permission from the sultan to suspend hostilities with the Franks so that they could harvest their crops, thus averting the danger of famine in the hinterland.[38] It must be emphasised however that we only have references to large-scale imports of grain and such a heavy dependence of the interior upon the coast in years of crisis, and obviously, in the long run, the role of the Palestinian ports as importers of grain did not protect them from the destructive ambitions of the Mamlūk sultans.

Even in normal years the Crusader principalities derived some of their prosperity from their position as middlemen in the sea-borne commerce between Egypt and Muslim Syria, handling such commodities as soap, cotton, fruit, sesame oil and salt fish.[39]

The fullest and clearest documentation on the nature of the trade conducted across the Christian-Muslim frontiers and on the economic activities of the Crusader principalities in the late thirteenth century is to be found in a series of truces negotiated between the Mamlūk sultans and Frankish princelings. We have the whole or part of the Arabic texts of truces concluded between Baybars and Hospitallers of Crac des Chevaliers and Margat in 665/1267[40] and between Baybars and the lady of Beirut in 667/1269,[41] between Baybars and the Hospitallers of Margat in 669/1271,[42] between Qalāwūn and Bohemond VI of Tripoli in 680/1281,[43] between Qalāwūn and Acre in 682/1283[44] and between Qalāwūn and the lady of Tyre in 683/1285.[45] In addition where the truce documents themselves are missing we often have quite detailed accounts of the negotiations preserved in the Arabic chronicles of those years, for instance for truce negotiations with Tyre in 665/1267 and with Tortosa and Tripoli in 669/1271.[46] Though the main preoccupations of the truce documents were political and military, most of the agreements include economic and commercial clauses.

In the 665/1267 agreement with the Hospitallers of Crac and Margat it emerges that the Hospitallers had been collecting a range of revenues and exercising a variety of rights over those Muslim towns, technically part of the principality of Homs, which lay west of the River Orontes—among them Barīn, Masyāf, Abū Qubays, and 'Aynab. Some of these rights and revenues were now to be split half-and-half with the Sultan Baybars. From the number and detailed nature of the clauses dealing with the subject, it would appear

that the main sources of revenue being thus partitioned were taxes and tolls on herds and flocks owned by Arabs, Kurds and Turks which were either permanently pastured on the west bank or else came into the partitioned area from across the Orontes. Less space is devoted to the peasantry, the concerns here being the respective jurisdictions of Christian and Muslim law, the exemption of the peasantry from forced labour and the apprehension of criminal or tax-defaulting peasants. Merchants and travellers are covered in one perfunctory clause. They are to be safe in the sultan's territory and in the Hospitallers' and in the partitioned area and they are to be free to take whatever road they choose. Other sources of Hospitaller revenue mentioned in the agreement came from rights over fishing, hunting, and the gathering of nenuphar (water lilies) on the banks of the Orontes. These revenues were now to be partitioned with the Sultan. Until 1267 the Hospitallers had also collected a levy on straw. According to the new agreement they renounced this tax in return for 50 Ṣūrī dinars annual compensation. Since blood prices for murder were covered in the agreement, the profits of justice may be considered a further source of Hospitaller revenue. Finally and most importantly the Hospitallers had been levying tributes in money and in kind on Hama (400 dinars), Abū Qubays (800 dinars), and the Ismā'īlī territories of Masyāf and Rusafa (1,200 Tripolitan dinars and 50,000 mudd of wheat and barley). These tributes the Hospitallers now relinquished.

In 666/1268 Crac des Chevaliers surrendered to the army of the sultan. The next agreement negotiated by the Hospitallers of Margat with Baybars in 669/1271 was much less favourable to the Hospitallers. In this agreement the Hospitallers were obliged to share on a half-and-half basis all harbour and shipping taxes coming from places situated on the coast from al-Qantāra the north to Balda in the south. In addition there was to be an equal division of taxes on imports, exports and merchandise in general. These taxes were to be entered in two separate sets of accounts and there was to be no change in the taxes. A further clause stated that goods going to the castle of Margat and its suburb are to be taxed, except for corn, provisions, clothes and horses destined for the personal use of the Hospitallers and their servants. Other clauses specify that the taxes are to be collected jointly by the deputies of the sultan and the Hospitallers, that the Hospitallers are not to supply the Ismā'īlī castles, that merchants coming through the territory of Margat were to be provided with military protection free of charge by the party concerned, and that when merchants from the Sultan's lands travelled into the region, of Margat and its dependant ports escorts and the patrol of the roads were to be the responsibility of both parties. There was also a naufragium clause in the agreement covering the security of lives and property in cases of shipwreck.

In Baybars' agreement with Beirut concluded in 665/1267 we find none of the interest in pastoralists and pasturage we found in the first of the Hospitaller treaties. Among the clauses that are of economic interest are: the stipulation that Baybars' subjects and their property should be safe from harm by the lady's subjects and her servants and ships; reciprocally, her subjects and servants should be safe from harm in the sultan's lands (Lattakia and Jabala are singled out for special mention here) from the sultan's subjects and his ships; there is to be no alteration in the customary taxes by either

side; if a Frankish merchant enters the sultan's territory from Beirut he is protected by the treaty, but if he then goes on elsewhere (presumably this refers to re-entering Christian territory at Acre, Tyre or other Crusader cities) he is no longer protected by the treaty.

Only a part of the text of the truce concluded between Qalāwūn and Bohemond VI of Tripoli seems to have been preserved in Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle. Nevertheless that part of the agreement which covers the partition of revenues is of the greatest interest. One of the stipulations here was that the port of Lattakia and its harbour should be taxed and that the revenues should be partitioned. How the partition was to work is not altogether clear for the agreement refers back to a clause in an earlier agreement between Baybars and the count of Tripoli which has not been preserved. However the document then goes on to state that an inspection post was to be set up on the Artūsia bridge (over the river Barīd, a few miles to the north of Tripoli) and that this port was to be staffed by the sultan's men. These would comprise a mushidd (senior inspector), a shāhid (junior inspector), a kātib (scribe), three slaves and a picket of ten soldiers. The main job of the inspector was to prevent forbidden articles (the possible nature of which will be considered later) from entering the territory of Tripoli. It is expressly laid down that the mushidd was not to hinder the import of cereals from Arqa (to the north of the Artūsia bridge and still held by the Franks) but only to impose taxes on what did come in.

Another clause in the treaty provides for the security of the sultan's and the count's ships from attacks by one another. Doubtless there were other clauses in the treaty providing for the safety of merchants, etc., but these have not been preserved by Ibn al-Furāt.

The truce document drawn up between Qalāwūn and the city of Acre in 682/1283 is perhaps the longest and certainly the most interesting of all the treaties. Among its many provisions we wish here to single out only those relating to commerce: it is forbidden to import certain articles into the Frankish territories including horses and weapons; those who try to break this embargo will have their goods confiscated; the property of merchants shipwrecked on the territory of either side must be returned as must the property of a merchant who dies in the territory of either of the contracting parties; debt defaulters who fly across the frontiers to escape prosecution must be returned; when the treaty expires or is terminated there is to be a forty-day period of grace to allow stranded travellers to reach their home territory safely.

The clause on contraband articles is particularly interesting as we have another official document preserved in Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle which shows how this embargo was enforced. The document in question is a tadhkīrat—that is a diploma of appointment to office—issued in Muharram 685/Feb-Mar 1286 to the Emir Shams al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Khalīl al-Tūrī. The Emir Shams al-Dīn was to replace another emir in the administration of an area close to the Frankish occupied coast of Palestine. The post was described as the Wilāya of al-Rūhā and the Roads to the Franks of Château Pèlerin, Haifa and Acre. The area he was to govern ran from a little way south of Haifa to a little way north of the port of Jaffa. Some of the area was partitioned with

the Franks, some was not and his area of authority lay to the west of places like Qaqun and Nablus which were more firmly in the hands of the Muslims. Shams al-Din's job is described in the tadhkīrat as being first to enforce law and order in the area and secondly to enforce the truce with Acre. 'What had been forbidden should remain so, that is to say, the import of horses, mules and weapons and anything that had been previously banned in the reign of al-Ẓāhir Baybars'.[47]

Finally we have the text of a truce between Qalāwūn and Margaret lady of Tyre negotiated in 684/1285. In this treaty too there is protection for ships at sea, for the property and lives of those shipwrecked on the coast and for the property of foreign merchants dying in each other's lands. The forbidden articles may not be imported into Tyre (it is taken for granted that it is known what these are). Finally merchants are given a forty-day period of grace at the expiry or cancellation of the truce to regain their home territory in safety.

The preoccupations of the Hospitaller treaty of 1267 indicates the economic importance of livestock breeding, at least in northern Syria. Clauses in the treaties with Beirut, Acre and Tyre suggest that there was nothing unusual in western merchants trading in the Muslim interior—though we have no other evidence for it in this period. However it must be emphasised that, with the exception of the treaty with Beirut in 1269, clauses covering the security of merchants and the levying of trade tolls constitute only small sections of agreements which appear to have been more concerned with agricultural revenues and the maintenance of law and order in the areas covered. Moreover the clauses on the security of merchants and on naufragium, etc. are drafted in vague and standardized terms. Though the Mamlūk regime presumably took the protection of merchants seriously and hoped to profit from commercial tolls, it would seem that its main aim was to restrict and control commerce across the frontiers, not to encourage it—or, to put it another way, it was concerned with contraband not commerce.

This is hardly surprising for a great deal of the Franks' commerce was not open and above board, nor was it conducted with the law-abiding, city-dwelling merchant communities of Damascus and Hama. Rather it was trade with what we may loosely call the dissidents and disaffected in Muslim Syria. As we have seen already, until the late 1260s the Hospitallers had been supplying the Ismā'īlīs.[48] In Palestine there was a surreptitious two-way trade in arms. Sometimes the Franks bought from the Muslims. In 687/1288-9 the Egyptian wazir Sanjar al-Shujā'ī was accused by a rival of selling arms from the royal stores to the Franks. Sanjar at first successfully defended himself to the Sultan Qalāwūn by claiming that he had only been selling inferior quality weapons to the Franks and at a profit to the Mamlūk state, but subsequently Qalāwūn came to the conclusion that even selling inferior quality weapons to the Franks redounded badly on Mamlūk prestige, and so Sanjar was deposed from the wazirate and fined 65,000 dinars.[49]

On other occasions it was the Franks who were selling arms and other supplies to the disorderly Arabs of Palestine,[50] and we know from references in Arabic chronicles that the Arabs for their part sold Muslims as slaves to the Franks. As Riley-Smith has pointed out, Acre possessed an important

slave market and it is possible that the sale of slaves, taken in warfare or purchased from the Arabs of the interior, constituted one of Acre's main exports to the West.

Moreover, looking at Christian commerce in Syria in broader terms, it is remarkable how little attention hitherto has been paid to the question of whom the Italian merchants and settlers in the Christian principalities traded with in Muslim Syria. As suggested above, much of their trade would have been with pastoralist tribesmen. But the civilian merchant community of the Syrian cities would have had other competitors too. Mamlūk emirs had capital to invest and surplus produce from their lands to dispose of. They had no prejudice against engaging in trade and it is clear that they were important as investors and salesmen. No class in Muslim society was better placed to take financial advantage of a harvest failure in Egypt or Syria than the Mamlūk military elite who had iqṭās in Syria and Egypt and often large stockpiles of grain to dispose of.[51]

Everywhere the interest of the state and of individual Mamlūk emirs in commercial activity is apparent. Baybars personally invested money in the purchase of slaves.[52] His atābak was an immensely wealthy emir; in 665/1267 the authorities in Beirut agreed to compensate him for his ship which had been captured at sea by pirates and further to free the merchants who had been taken from the ship.[53] As we have seen above, Qalāwūn's wazir supervised the sale of arms to the Franks. Some Mamlūk emirs in Egypt collected their iqṭā revenues from the customs tolls levied in the ports of the Nile Delta.[54] There is not space here to do more than indicate the variety of Mamlūk economic interests, but insofar as Mamlūk policies towards the Crusader principalities were swayed by commercial considerations, entrepreneurs from the military class were best placed to sway them. Arab merchants do not seem to have enjoyed any influence at court until the reign of al-Ashrāf Khālīl (689/1290—693/1293).[55]

Another general observation seems worth making. It is of course true that in the eastern Mediterranean shipping from western ports such as Genoa, Venice, Pisa, Marseilles and Barcelona shared a near-monopoly of sea-borne trade. But it was not total, and there was a Muslim merchant marine operating in eastern waters, although its existence can only be traced from indirect references in the sources. Not all the Muslim ships referred to necessarily belonged to Egyptians or Syrians, and it is possible that some of the shipping was north African in origin. A ship attacked by Marseillais pirates in 670/1271 belonged to a subject of the Khan of the Golden Horde.[56] But some ships were clearly Egyptian—for instance the atābak's ship, already mentioned, which was attacked by Beiruti corsairs in the 1260s. Another Egyptian ship was attacked by the Genoese at Candelore in 1287.[57] The Sultan Baybars negotiated with the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII to secure the right to send one ship a year through the Bosphorus to purchase slaves in the Black Sea area, though according to Greek contemporaries he actually sent two.

The concern of the Egyptian sultans to stamp out or at least restrict the damage done to Muslims by piracy is apparent in their diplomacy—not only in their negotiations with the Crusader principalities discussed above, but also in Mu'izz Aybak's treaty with the Venetians in 1254, Qalāwūn's negotiations

with Michael VIII in 1285,[58] his agreement with Cilician Armenia in the same year,[59] his agreement with Aragon in 1286[60] and, above all, his treaty with Genoa in 1290. Of course not all Muslim money and merchandise was invested in Muslim ships. Partnerships and investments could be shared between Muslim and Italian. There is no way of knowing, for instance, whether the ship, captured by the Genoese Lucchetto Grimaldi in the Armenian harbour of Gorighos with the property of subjects of the ilkhān of Persia, the king of Cilician Armenia and Muslim residents in the Crusader principalities on board, was Muslim or not.[61]

It is highly unlikely that any Muslim ships from Egypt visited western ports. But they would have traded with the Crusader ports and certainly with the Syrian ports of Jabala and Lattakia. In the first half of the thirteenth century Jabala and Lattakia (the best port on the Syrian coastline) were under Muslim government,[62] but they were reoccupied by Bohemond VI during the Mongol invasion of 1259-60. An important part of the population remained Muslim, however, and the threat to evacuate the population of Lattakia was one of the levers which Baybars used to secure a partition of authority and revenue in these two places.[63]

This takes us to another important observation. Lattakia and Jabala were singled out for special mention in Baybars' treaty with Beirut. In Baybars' second treaty with the Hospitallers there is a clause specifically dealing with the string of tiny harbours from al-Qantara to Balda. Grain was imported through Gaza and Jaffa. From the perspective of investors and notaries in Italy it was the trade across the Mediterranean with the great ports of Acre, Tyre, Tripoli and Beirut that was important. But the Christians and Muslims in Syria are unlikely to have shared that perspective. Then, as in later periods, much Levantine commerce must have hugged the coast. There was a lot of cabotage and tramping, a lot of carrying and selling of foodstuffs and other staple commodities to quite small ports up and down the Syrian coast and short-haul journeys between Syria and Egypt.

Moreover, because ships hugged the coast even when engaged in commerce over longer distances with more valuable commodities, the ports on the Syrian coast were able to operate, effectively, as toll gates and also to profit from supplying provisions and services to ships that took refuge in their harbours. It is likely that a large portion of the harbour dues that were partitioned with Mamlūks along the coast were from activities of this kind.[64]

The importance of this sort of role for the Syrian and Palestinian ports becomes obvious, when we consider that,as far as the Mamlūk sultans in Egypt and the Genoese in the Levant were concerned, an important long-distance route - perhaps the most important route - ran between the ports of Alexandria and Damietta in Egypt and the ports on the coast of Cilician Armenia, most notably Ayas. As Riley-Smith has pointed out, on the basis of the registers of Genoese notaries active in Ayas, Lattakia and Beirut, there were eleven separate sailings from Ayas to Egypt between February and June 1274 and thirteen between February and December 1279.[65] (Earlier in the century it seems that the Venetians trafficked between Constantinople and Alexandria.[66]) On the Muslim side it is evident from Qalāwūn's agreement with the Armenians in 684/1285 that large numbers of Muslims, some

of them Qalāwūn's subjects, some of them not, were trading in Cilician Armenia, and that a particularly important part of this commerce as far as the sultans were concerned was in slaves. Since Caffa and Tana in the Crimea only became important as slave-trade ports in the fourteenth century, it is open to speculation that Ayas in the late thirteenth century was the main supplier of white slaves to Egypt. Also of course Cilician Armenia must have been the main outlet on the Mediterranean for trade coming through Mongol lands on a northern route, from Mosul, from Tabriz and from places further east.[67]

Thus the Crusader ports were well placed to profit from their position as intermediaries in a long-distance, sea-borne trade, but their economically strategic position lay on a north-south axis from Ayas to Alexandria, not on an east-west one from Damascus to Italy.

These suggestions about the nature of Levantine commerce in the thirteenth century have relied heavily upon source material in Arabic. To an extent the arguments are the victim of the biases and silences of those sources. Therefore they are only suggestions and it is probable that a clearer picture will emerge only after more work has been done in Italian archives.

* * * * *

Turning now to the question of money, it must be said at the outset that it is impossible to get any clear overall picture of how moneys circulated in thirteenth-century Syria. Not all the Ayyubid and Mamlūk mints in Syria have been identified. We are uncertain as to the extent to which moneys minted by the Latins circulated in the hinterland of Syria, and we are similarly uncertain as to the extent to which Egyptian-minted coins circulated there. Some coin hoards must have been buried by refugees, and, in view of what has already been remarked above about the movement of refugees in this period, the evidence of coin hoards, though crucial, may be misleading. Even the extent to which transactions depended upon money is difficult to discover; tributes were often levied in kind, the endowments of the pious might be fixed in kind, iqtā revenues might be collected in the form of crops and the army paid with the dīnār jayshī, a notional currency covering payments which were mostly made in kind. When and where money did circulate and whether that money circulated at a fixed face value or by weight are matters of controversy.

Many of our uncertainties arise from our ignorance about the extent to which the Ayyubid and Mamlūk regimes directly controlled the minting of coinage and the extent to which they were able to enforce the acceptability of particular coins in the market-place and our ignorance too of the sort of considerations which may have influenced their monetary policies. Much depends also on the ability of the ordinary trader in the market-place to distinguish a 'good' coin from a 'bad' one, or an imitation from its genuine prototype. In view of contemporary numismatic difficulties in this area, it must remain doubtful whether he could.

The mint was an important source of revenue for the ruler. In the late 1230s the Cairo mint seems to have been producing a profit of about 36,000 dinars annually as revenue.[68] In the 1250s the mint in Aleppo produced 100,000 dirhams annually for its Ayyubid prince.[69] In Mamlūk Egypt the profits of

the mint were sold as a farm, as a reference in Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir's chronicle to a petition of the farmers of the mint to the Sultan in 662/1264 indicates.[70] However we do not know what sort of person purchased the right to the profits of the mint (the petitioners of 662/1264 may well have been Mamlūk emirs or Italians), nor should we assume that the purchasers of the farm had any control over the operations of the mint. In Mamlūk Damascus at least, the operations of the mint continued to be supervised in the 1260s by a state-appointed official, the Nāzir Dār al-Darb (supervisor of the mint).[71]

When money was struck it was not always struck to meet economic needs. The propaganda value of coins was obvious. When Baybars' son al-Sa'īd was invested with the nominal co-rule of Egypt and Syria in 662/1264 the proclamation drawn up by Baybars' head of chancery included the statement 'There should be no sort of dirham or dinar which will not shine with our (i. e. Baybars' and Sa'īd's) names.'[72] This was an aspiration which could not be realized Probably the bulk of the coinage in circulation in the late thirteenth century continued to be Ayyubid. But the statement was propaganda and reveals the value of coins as such. Again, when Baybars briefly occupied Kayseri in Anatolia in 675/1277 one of his first acts was to have the khutba said in his name in the mosque and Ẓāhirī dirhams struck.[73] The issue of such a coin seems closer to the striking of a victory medallion than it does to the issue of money.

On the other hand the decision whether or not to suppress an older issue of coinage was not necessarily taken on a purely economic basis either. Some time before 569/1174 Nūr al-Dīn received a petition in the Dar al-'Adl (House of Justice) at Damascus from certain merchants requesting that he suppress a certain coin known as the qirtās and that he should replace it with dinars struck in his own name. Nūr al-Dīn refused to do this, fearing, he said, to ruin those of his subjects who might have ten or twenty thousand of those coins in their possession. Abū Shāma concludes this little anecdote with the exclamation 'Consider how often and how much he showed concern for the welfare of his subjects.'[74]

Similarly the petition presented in the Cairo Dar al-'Adl by the farmers of the mint to Baybars, of which mention has already been made above, was to the effect that the minting of dirhams had now ceased and that the old Nāṣirī dirhams should be suppressed (implicitly to make way for a new issue of dirhams of superior fineness). Baybars refused this petition. He instead reduced either the amount they paid for the farming of the mint or their obligation to mint (it is not clear which) from 250,000 dirhams to 200,000 dirhams and remarked that 'the people should not suffer any loss of wealth from this'. The point here is that in both cases the decision not to suppress bad coinage is presented as the act of a virtuous ruler--there is even perhaps an element of public charade in such performances in the Dar al-'Adl.

Though Egypt and the Syrian towns had all been ruled by various Ayyubid princes in the early thirteenth century and though they were subsequently governed by one and the same Mamlūk regime in the late thirteenth century, Egypt and Syria certainly did not form one monetary unit.

From the late twelfth century onwards the Egyptian gold dinar was no longer of a standard weight, yet large numbers of dinars of a high degree of

fineness continued to be struck.[75] Curiously, though the dinars were not of a standard weight, they were almost invariably heavier than the old Fatimid dinar or the legal dinar of c. 4.25 g.

Egypt's silver dirhams, unlike those struck in Syria, were mostly of a poor alloy. The bulk of the dirhams were probably 'black' or 'waraq' with alloys of c. 27-32% silver. According to the fifteenth-century chronicler Maqrīzī, Saladin variously struck a Nāṣirī dirham of pure silver and/or a Nāṣirī dirham which was only half silver in content. Other Ayyubid princes after Saladin, notably al-Kāmil, seem to have attempted to produce dirhams with a high silver content, but the inferior dirhams, 'black', 'waraq' and Nāṣirī, continued to circulate into the early Mamlūk period. From c. 1250 onwards there was a fairly steady improvement in the alloy of the dirham (the crisis-beset reign of al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz was an exception), this improvement culminating in the Ẓāhirī dirham of the Sultan Baybars which had a silver content of approximately 70%.

Supplies of the copper coin, the fals, seem to have been unstable. For long periods in the thirteenth century no copper coins were issued. On the other hand problems were caused by excesses in the supply of copper coins in 630/1232 and again in 695/1295-6.

In Syria everything was different.[76] It appears that scarcely any dinars at all were minted by the Muslims in thirteenth-century Syria. (Claude Cahen has argued from the near non-existence of Syrian gold coins that Christian gold coins cannot therefore have been minted for use in Syrian markets,[77] but the logic of that argument is not obvious, for it is surely possible either that Christian-minted bezants caused the disappearance of the Muslim Syrian dinar or, alternatively, that the disappearance of the Syrian dinar for other reasons encouraged an influx of other gold coins precisely to fill the gap.)

By contrast dirhams were normally plentiful in Syria and of a fine alloy too, usually ranging from 80 to 90%. But there does appear to have been a silver famine in Syria c. 1230-40. There was also a temporary reduction in the fineness of the dirham to 72-74% in the reign of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf and again it would appear that no dirhams were minted in Damascus from 1260 to 1266. Incidentally dirhams were struck with remarkable rapidity by short-term regimes and usurpers in Damascus. Tūrānshāh had dirhams minted in his name there as he passed on down to Egypt. Hulagu issued dirhams in Damascus and so did the rebel emirs Sanjar al-Ḥalabī and Sunqor al-'Ashqār. It seems likely that some of these issues were struck to declare a change of regime rather than to meet a genuine economic need.

Copper coinage was in fairly constant demand and, as we shall see, there was a shortage of it c. 1259-60.

Egypt's abandonment of the standard-weight dinar and the discrepancy between the Syrian and Egyptian dirhams, at least until Baybars' issue of the Ẓāhirī dirham, might lead one to conclude that until then Syria had been growing richer and Egypt poorer, as Egypt lost its stock of precious metals.[78] However the validity of that conclusion is dependant upon a number of assumptions, among them firstly the assumption that there is some necessary correlation between the issue of debased moneys and the impoverishment of the

economy. No such necessary correlation exists. The issue of coins of low or variable alloys by the Egyptian mints might be taken as an indication of the impoverishment of the state but not the economy or of the greed of the state issuing authority but not of its impoverishment or simply of the increased demand for money by the thriving Egyptian economy. Nor can we take it for granted that the Syrian Muslim dirham, with its high silver content, was the common or standard currency in Syria at that time. There is evidence that in the late thirteenth century large quantities of dinars and dirhams may have been brought into Syria from Egypt. One has the impression that this phenomenon owed less to commerce than it did to the requirements and expenditure of sultans, officials and soldiers coming from Egypt. Thus, for example, when the Sultan Baybars, encamped in Palestine in 663/1264-5, wished to reward a garrison and a relief army on the Euphrates, he had to send to Egypt for 200,000 dirhams to be brought north to supplement those available in Damascus.[79] Yet it would be perverse to argue from such instances as this that Syria in the thirteenth century was becoming richer and Egypt poorer. A variety of other evidence suggests the reverse and, as we have seen above, it was Syria, not Egypt, which bore the brunt of Khwarizmian, Kurdish, Turkoman and Mongol depredations in the thirteenth century. The contrast between high-grade Syrian dirhams and low-grade Egyptian dirhams would remain but would become less important if one were to speculate that most of the population of Syria used Egyptian-minted Nāṣirī or 'waraq' dirhams most of the time.

Though a great deal of Egyptian money did come into Syria from the time of Saladin onwards, and some Syrian gold and silver presumably percolated into Egypt, the rate of exchange between dinar and dirham in the two areas was not necessarily the same.[80] Even within Egypt, (for which the evidence is more plentiful), the rate could vary from year to year, or perhaps according to the transaction. Thus the rate for a low grade 'waraq' dirham could vary between 1:35 and 1:40, while the rate for Baybars' Ẓāhirī dirham with its much higher silver content, could vary between 1:20 and 1:28½. A rate of 20 Ẓāhirī dirhams to the dinar suggests a gold:silver ratio of 1:9 or 10, a rate of 28½ Ẓāhirī dirhams to the dinar a gold:silver ratio of 1:13.4 (so long that is as one assumes a direct dependence of the dinar:dirham rate upon the gold:silver rate).

In Damascus on the other hand, when Abū Shāma came to cite the rate for the Egyptian (Miṣrī) dinar against the (presumably) Syrian dirham in 636/1238-9 he gave it as 1:9.[81] Since the actual Egyptian dinar of the early thirteenth century had no fixed weight, Abū Shāma must have been intending to refer to the 'standard' or legal dinar of 24 carats fineness and 4.2 g (and perhaps we should take his estimate of wheat prices in 634/1245-6 expressed in Nāṣirī dinars, i.e. Saladin's dinars of irregular weight, in the same sense). Whatever sort of dinar Abū Shāma was referring to, the discrepancy between his figure and the Egyptian ones quoted above is startling.

It may be explained in two not incompatible ways. Firstly the rate given for dinars and dirhams in 636 reflects the temporary scarcity of silver in Syria in the 1230s—a phenomenon which has been suggested by another scholar of this period.[82] Secondly the rate between dinar and dirham is not only the

product of the local scarcity of gold and silver moneys relative to one another, but is also determined by political and social considerations. In this particular case the high value placed upon silver may for example reflect fiscal demands by the authorities in Damascus to be paid in dirhams. Jawād, the governor of Damascus in that year, is said to have secured the sum of 600,000 dirhams through extortion from the city's notables.[83] Alternatively the rate quoted may be an official rate fixed by al-Ṣālih Ayyūb or his predecessors which deliberately aimed at under-valuing the Egyptian-minted dinar.

Whatever the explanation for Abū Shāma's figure, the rate was clearly local and temporary. Why else should Abū Shāma explain to his readers what it was? Such a rate never applied in Egypt and in Syria Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥya gives the rate of 20 or 21 dirhams to the dinar by the early fourteenth century.[84]

Much has been written about the export of moneys to the Levant by Italian merchants, most notably by Lopez and Watson.[85] It has been argued (simplifying considerably) that the export of silver coins and bullion from the West and their exchange against Egyptian and Syrian gold (at a profit to the western merchants) and the shipment of that gold back to Europe may explain the West's return to a gold standard from the latter half of the thirteenth century. But it remains to be shown whether such movements of gold and silver took place on a sufficiently large scale to be significant.

In any event some of the gold and silver taken out East by the Europeans seems to have been taken to Muslim mints where it was recoined as dinars and dirhams. The Italian gold and silver was sold to the mint at a privileged rate and sometimes it would appear that the work in the mint was done by the the Italians themselves. Of particular note in this respect are the commercial agreements concluded between the Italian merchant communities and the Muslim rulers of Egypt and Syria. In Venice's treaty with al-Ẓāhir Ghāzī of Aleppo in 1207-8 the sale of silver by the Venetians to the mint was covered. In 1238, during the reign of the Egyptian ruler al-'Adil II, the Venetians negotiated an agreement which seems to have covered payments for gold sold by the Venetians to the mint and further to have allowed the Venetians themselves to use the mint in Alexandria. A similar agreement with Mu'izz Aybak in 1254 covered the sale and minting of gold and silver by the Venetians in Egypt.[86] In 1290 the agreement concluded between the Genoese and the Sultan Qalāwūn fixed a tariff payable by the Genoese on the import of gold and silver and also allowed them to mint dirhams which they could use to trade with in Cairo without paying any further charges.[87].

It is noteworthy that similar clauses covering the import of gold and silver and minting privileges are to be found in a series of agreements negotiated between Venice and Cilician Armenia in 1202, 1245, 1271, 1307 and 1321. It seems possible also that Venice had had at some time minting privileges in the Crusader cities of Acre and Tyre.[88]

Since many of the surviving agreements cover Egypt where the price of gold in relation to silver does not seem to have been more favourable than in Europe and since the import of gold as well as silver is covered in most of these agreements, it appears unlikely that the Italians were engaged in anything so simple as the sale of silver from Europe in exchange for gold in the

Near East. Rather, the clauses dealing with money and bullion in these agreements indicate that the Italians were concerned to secure options which would allow them to take advantage of regional differences and fluctuations over short periods of time in the relative value of dinars and dirhams. Beyond that, they were of course keen to provide themselves with locally-acceptable currency while at the same time avoiding exchange premiums in the market or seignorage at the mint. The concession of such privileges may have had vast implications for the monetary history of the Near East. On the other hand of course they may never or only rarely have been taken advantage of.

Besides the dinars and dirhams struck by Muslim mints in Syria, a range of moneys were struck in gold, silver and copper by the Christians in the Crusader States. Coins were struck not only by the kings of Jerusalem, the princes of Antioch and the counts of Tripoli but also on a smaller scale by the Frankish seigneuries in what remained of the kingdom of Jerusalem—among them Sidon, Tyre, Beirut and perhaps Jaffa. These issues were perhaps supplemented by moneys from Cyprus and Cilician Armenia. Gold and silver coins were taken to the Near East by western, mainly Italian merchants, and we know from the evidence of both coin hoards and documents that large quantities of gold and silver—particularly silver—were brought out to the East by crusaders in the thirteenth century.[89]

It would be superfluous for me now to elaborate on the above. For my present purposes only one particular range of moneys is of interest—the bezants and dirhams minted by the Franks in the Levant in imitation of Muslim coins. Even here the numismatic evidence has been carefully presented by others so that it is not necessary to do more than summarise the points of particular interest that arise from a numismatic examination of these coins, before proceeding to look at the textual evidence for their circulation.[90]

At some time in the twelfth century, perhaps as early as the 1130s or 40s, but probably not on any very large scale until the second half of the century, the Christians in the Crusader principalities began to mint gold coins with Arabic Muslim legends and dates in imitation of the Fatimid gold dinars. Though similar in appearance to the Fatimid dinars, the Crusader coins were not of the same high standard of fineness. These coins are referred to frequently in western documents as 'bisancii saracenati'.

The issue of such coins continued on into the thirteenth century, but in 1250 as a result of an intervention by the papal legate to the Holy Land, Odo of Châteauroux, the minting of coins with Muslim legends seems to have ceased. From 1251 issues of imitation dinars appeared bearing Christian legends and Christian dates in Arabic, and some of these were marked with crosses on one or both sides. On the strength of the numismatic evidence, however, we should be justified in concluding that the striking of these latter coins was abandoned by 1258 at the latest. Lopez, writing in 1957, was of the opinion that the Crusader bezant was gradually phased out and replaced by the new Italian gold coins.[91] Yet the appearance of these new Italian moneys (the genovino and others) is not noticed by the Arabic sources dealing with Syria in this period, nor, so far as I am aware, have any Italian gold coins been found in coin hoards in Syria until the very end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth.[92]

Imitations of Muslim dirhams and half-dirhams were also minted though no examples have been found for the twelfth century. In the early thirteenth century the dirhams of Aleppo were copiously imitated. From c. 1240 onwards it was the turn of the Damascus dirhams of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl (ruler of Damascus in 1237 and again from 1239 to 1245). These imitations have al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl's name on the obverse and the name of the caliph of Bagdad, al-Mustanṣir, on the reverse. They are somewhat difficult to identify, for, as Balog has remarked, they are skilful copies and, as Bates has remarked, the surviving copies outnumber their original models. They are identified by the failure of the dates shown on the coins to correspond with the years in which al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl ruled over Damascus and in which al-Mustanṣir was caliph of Bagdad. Also some of these dirhams show crosses on their margins, and examples of imitation dirhams analysed by Balog were found to have a silver content of 76-79% while their Muslim models had a silver content of 80-89%.[93] (But Muslim issues from Damascus later in the 1240s had an alloy closer to that of the Crusader imitations). These Crusader imitations, types I-IV in Bates' classification, were struck from 641/1243-4 to perhaps as late as 647/1249-50.

In 1251 and 1253 dirhams with Christian legends in Arabic were struck by the Crusaders (and some of these overtly Christian coins even had crosses in the centre). In 1253 imitation dirhams bearing the names of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl and al-Mustanṣir, but also a religiously neutral inscription were struck (type V in Bates' classification). A further type of coin (type VI), very similar to the above but bearing the (almost certainly fictitious) date 641, has been identified and Bates has argued that it was struck at around the same time as the type V dirham. It would seem from the numismatic evidence that minting by the Crusaders of imitation dirhams ceased in 1253 or soon after.

However if the date on the type VI '641' dirham is fictitious, then it is possible, though not likely, that other Muslim dates shown on imitation dirhams of the types I-IV are equally fictitious and arbitrary. Most of the imitation dirhams minted by the Crusaders which have been published in recent years have come from two hoards of Egyptian, Syrian and Crusader silver. One, discovered at Fayyum, has been dated to the year 655/1256-7, on the basis of the latest date borne by any of the Muslim coins in the hoard. The other, a Syrian hoard, has been dated to 653/1255. No dirhams from al-Nāṣir's Damascus are known after 654/1256-7. As far as Egypt is concerned, though dirhams minted for Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī in 655 are known to exist none are for 656, and al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz (657-8) minted no dirhams until 658. Therefore both hoards might date from as late as 657 or 658 (the years of the Mongol invasion, plausible years for a Syrian refugee to bury a hoard). Since imitations form such a large portion of these two hoards, much depends upon the dating of the imitations, and, as we shall see later, there are some grounds, though not decisive ones, for thinking that a lot of Crusader dirhams may have been minted in the late 1250s.

Of course it was not unknown for Muslims in this period to counterfeit dirhams. In the early 1260s for instance the overseer of the mint in Damascus was disgraced and imprisoned by the governor of the city after dies for the striking of counterfeit coins had been discovered stored in a box in the mint.[94]

In principle it is possible that Muslim forgers could have produced some of the imitation dirhams mentioned above, following the conventionalized epigraphic errors of the widely current crusader dirhams. However while crude counterfeits of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl's dirhams have been discovered, it would seem that the imitation dirhams classified by Bates are too fine and too consistent in the distribution of their weights around a modal value to be confused with such counterfeits.

In discussing the evidence in Arabic sources for the circulation of imitation moneys, the first coin to be considered is the Ṣūrī dinar. The equation of the term 'dinar Ṣūrī' with the gold coin minted by the crusaders in imitation of the Muslim dinar has been taken for granted by some and firmly denied by others.[95]

Qazwīnī, the traveller and geographer who died in 682/1283, explained the term thus: 'From Tyre (Ṣūr) the Ṣūrī dinars are derived, which the people of Syria and Iraq use in their transactions.'[96] Unfortunately what Qazwīnī has to say about the Ṣūrī dinar does not necessarily apply to his own time. Arab geographers were even more prone to plagiarize from their predecessors than were Arab chroniclers.[97] Indeed, in the light of what has been said earlier about the closing of the frontier between Syria and Iraq to commerce, it is very unlikely that Ṣūrī dinars circulated to any significant extent in Iraq in Qazwīnī's lifetime, and Ibn al-Fuwāṭī, the thirteenth-century Iraqi chronicler makes no reference to any such coin. When Qazwīnī refers to the Ṣūrī dinar he may be referring to a twelfth-century coin minted by the crusaders in imitation of the Fatimid dinar, or even to the Fatimid dinar itself, which was minted in Tyre up to 1124. According to Ibn Khallikān, when the Crusaders captured Tyre from the Fatimids they took over the mint there and continued to mint coins for a further three years until 1127 when they stopped.[98]

At all events it is absolutely clear that by the early thirteenth century the term 'Ṣūrī' was no longer being applied by Arab writers to the Fatimid dinar minted in Tyre, for the Fatimid dinar was 90% fine or even finer, but al-Nābulsī's report on administrative and financial malpractices in Egypt (presented to al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb in 1242) described Ṣūrī gold brought to the mint as being only 60% fine.[99] Actual Crusader bezants which have been analysed have been found to range between 60 and 80% in fineness; this is broadly compatible with al-Nābulsī's 60% when we allow for the inaccurate assaying techniques of the time and the tendency of the Egyptian mint to undervalue foreign dinars.

While it is plausible that the adjective 'Ṣūrī' did indeed originally refer to coins struck in Tyre by the Fatimids or the crusaders immediately after them, it is virtually certain that the revived use of the term from the late twelfth century onwards was a calque based on the French 'besant de Syrie'. The coin referred to by the Arabs as Ṣūrī then may have been minted in Acre, Tyre, Tripoli or anywhere.

In al-Shayzārī's late twelfth-century manual of ḥisba (market inspection) the sale of Egyptian dinars against Ṣūrī dinars was forbidden, so it would seem that the Ṣūrī dinar was by then regarded as a foreign coin or a coin of

lower alloy or both.[100] In Ibn al-Athīr's chronicle al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh the price of wheat in Damascus in 574/1178-9 is given in 'old Ṣūrī dinars', surely implying that a new Ṣūrī dinar was by then circulating.[101]

Generally, the period in which the term 'Ṣūrī dinar' is used corresponds too closely to the crusader period and appears too frequently in the context of transactions with or by the crusaders for the term not to have referred to a crusader coin.

Among early appearances of the Ṣūrī dinar in the works of Ibn al-Athīr and Bahā al-Dīn ibn Shaddād, we find a Frankish lord ransoming prisoners from the Muslims for 150,000 Ṣūrī dinars in 575/1179-80 and we find grain prices in Acre and Antioch in 586/1190-1 expressed in Ṣūrī dinars.[102] The last reference to the Ṣūrī dinar known to me occurs in Ṣāliḥ ibn Yahyā's Tārīkh Bayrūt. In 702/1302-3 a Buhtorid emir, taken captive by the Franks during a raid on the Lebanese coast, was ransomed for 3,000 Ṣūrī dinars.[103]

References to the Ṣūrī dinar are especially frequent in Arabic chronicles and documents of the late thirteenth century dealing with matters connected with the Crusader principalities. In particular, the tributes, taxes, and blood prices mentioned in Mamlūk-Crusader truce negotiations are commonly fixed in Ṣūrī dinars. However it is also clear that the Ṣūrī dinar was not the only gold currency in the area but was competing with (or co-existing with) the Egyptian dinar. Thus in 665/1267 Baybars allowed the Hospitallers 50 Ṣūrī dinars annually as compensation for the loss of certain rights over straw west of the Orontes and the Hospitallers renounced the tribute they had been levying on Aynab of 500 Ṣūrī dinars annually. On the other hand they also renounced a tribute they had formerly been levying on nearby Abū Qubays of 600 Egyptian dinars annually.[104]

Again, when Baybars sent a deputation of Muslims into Tripoli in 669/1271 to ransom prisoners, they took with them 3,000 Egyptian dinars, but in 673/1275 the sultan's sabre-rattling induced the count to pay him 20,000 Ṣūrī dinars.[105]

Though Ṣūrī dinars were used for payments between Muslim and Christian, or at least for computing such payments, I have found no references to the Ṣūrī dinar being used for payments between Muslim and Muslim in Damascus or elsewhere in Syria or Egypt. When the type of dinar is specified in such circumstances it is either the Egyptian dinar or a pure gold ('aynan) dinar. The Ṣūrī dinar was not an international currency in any sense save that its gold content and Arabic form made it an occasionally acceptable means of payment in Muslim Syria.

There are a few mentions in western commercial and notarial documents of a coin known as the Tripolitan bezant (bizantius Tripolatus).[106] I know of only one reference in Arabic to the coin. In 1267, at the same time as the Hospitallers formally renounced their tribute upon Aynab levied in Ṣūrī dinars and that upon Abū Qubays levied in Egyptian dinars, they also renounced the tribute they had formerly been taking from the Ismā'īlī castles of Masyāf and Rusāfa of 1,200 dinars Qumsiyya (i.e. of the comes or count of Tripoli), and a few years later the Ismā'īlīs began to bring the gold (dhahab) which they had formerly payed to the Hospitallers to Baybars instead.[107] Instances

such as the above make it unlikely that the Ṣūrī dinar was a money of account, used to make notional estimates which would then be paid in silver or copper, for there is no point in having a money of account if it does not actually simplify one's accounts and provide a fixed yardstick of value.

The above figures have been taken from a copy of the treaty document in a chancery manual. Unfortunately when chroniclers mention sums of money in Ṣūrī dinars, their employment of the term is slapdash and so casual as to suggest that they took little care to distinguish between dinar and dirham. Thus, according to Ibn 'Abdal-Ẓāhir, in 665/1267 Baybars demanded that Tyre should pay 15,000 Ṣūri dinars as blood money for a murdered Mamlūk and that half this sum should be payed instantly, but when Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir's nephew came to abridge and gloss his uncle's chronicle, he gave the figure as 25,000 Ṣūri dinars, which he added was equivalent to 1,000 Egyptian dinars and of this sum 7,000 dinars were paid straight away![108] Similarly when Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir came to give the blood prices which had been fixed in the agreement with Tyre in 684/1285, he gave that for a knight as being 1,100 Ṣūrī dirhams (sic), that for a turcopole as being 200 dinars and that for a peasant as 100 dinars.[109]

It would seem from the above that the Ṣūrī dinar continued to circulate widely after the 1250s, until at least the 1280s (and the continued circulation of such a coin is also suggested by numerous references in the Genoese notarial acts witnessed at Ayas to the sarracenate bezant of Acre in the late 1270s—and also to the sarracenate bezant of Armenia).[110] It is disturbing that the numismatic evidence for these coins has not yet been found and therefore the possibility that, at some time around the mid-thirteenth century, the Ṣūrī dinar became a ghost money should be borne in mind.

Turning now to the minting of imitation dirhams and half-dirhams by the crusaders, it has been noted above that no examples of crusader dirhams or half-dirhams have been found which date from the twelfth century. Nevertheless there is evidence in al-Shayzārī's twelfth-century ḥisba manual that such coins may have circulated. The author has this to say about the purchase of bad coins:

> There are those who purchase dinars with dirhams of silver or Frankish qarāṭīs and then such a one says to the seller "One of your debtors has brought these to me so that you can be dispensed from counting them or weighing them; or he has contracted debts to me for small sums". He profits in this from the ignorance of others and it is forbidden'.[111]

The overall sense of this passage is unclear to me, but evidently Frankish coins, probably of poor silver alloy, were known to the Muslim money changers of the twelfth century. It is quite possible that the term qirtās (pl. qarāṭīs) was used to designate the Frankish denier, but this must remain uncertain as long as the composition, alloy and weight of the Muslim coin of that name remain in doubt. The Muslim qirtās, as we have already seen, was circulating in Syria during the reign of Nūr al-Dīn. The Muslim qirtās seems to have been a half-dirham. Its rate against the dinar fluctuated from 50:1 to 60:1

or even higher. It continued to circulate widely in Syria and Egypt in the late thirteenth century and was sometimes called the 'black qirtās'.[112]

This brings us finally to what the Arabic sources have to tell us about the imitation dirhams produced by the Franks. The problems that these coins caused in the markets of Damascus in 658/1259-60 are discussed by two Arabic sources.[113] After recording the soaring price of food in the city, Abū Shāma, the first of these sources adds:

> 'This was due to the Franks who were striking dirhams known as 'bāqiyya' dirhams (al-darāhim al-ma'rūfati bi'l-bāqiyya) which were of a bad alloy. I heard that in every hundred parts, there were only fifteen of silver, the rest being of copper. These dirhams became very abundant. Several times there was talk of suppressing them. As everyone who held them tried to get rid of them, fearing that they would be suppressed, so there was a lot of spending on different things, which made prices rise. When it was suppressed at the end of the year, four dirhams of this money were exchanged against one Nāṣirī dirham, and the Nāṣirī dirham itself was only half (silver).'

The British Museum manuscript of the continuation of Abū Shamā's history, the Dhayl, gives 'bāqiyya'; the Paris manuscript, used by the editors of the Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, apparently gives 'bāfiyya'. The sense of 'bāqiyya' (if that is the correct reading) is unclear. Does the adjective refer to a place or does it mean 'left over', or 'still owing as a debt', or 'calamitous'? The obscurity of the term and the context in which it appears has prompted the editor of the Arabic printed text to emend the word to 'yāfiyya' i.e. Jaffan.[114] This emendation, while speculative, is plausible enough, and has been followed by Lyons and Riley-Smith in their edition and translation of parts of Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle. The Vienna manuscript of Ibn al-Furāt gives 'bāqiyya' and has been emended by the editors to 'yāfiyya' so that their translation of the relevant passage in Ibn al-Furāt reads:

> 'Prices rose very high indeed because of the shortages (of food) and because of the poor quality of Jaffan dirhams. The people asked for help because of these (dirhams) and al-Malik al-Mujāhid, the Sultan of Damascus, suppressed this coinage and minted a new one. The new dirhams appeared in his name, with an inscription on them: "Al-Malik al-Mujāhid 'Alam al-Dīn Sanjar, the ruler of Damascus".'[115]

Maqrīzī, a fifteenth-century compilator seems to be relying on a third source. In covering the causes of the rise in prices in Damascus in 658 (which seems to have begun even before Sanjar's usurpation), he makes no mention of the Frankish dirham, but says:

> 'The people returned to Damascus (i.e. after the Mongol withdrawal), the prices became very high through lack of provisions and there was a lack of fulūs (copper money) there and the people suffered harm in the market through having to use dirhams, and what had been easy became difficult.'

Coming from Maqrīzī this explanation is notable, for he normally displays a ferocious prejudice against copper money. It is also noteworthy that

Maqrīzī does not give any credit to al-Malik al-Mujāhid Sanjar for solving Damascus' monetary crisis during his brief period of authority over that city. According to Maqrīzī prices were still high in the following year, and Baybars took steps to bring grain into Damascus and Syria.[116]

Ibn al-Suqā'ī's biographical dictionary confirms the impression that, whatever monetary measures Sanjar may have taken, they were not really successful in bringing down prices, for he says that two years after Baybars' victory over Sanjar, prices were still very high in the city. He gives examples of inflated prices in darāhim judad ('new dirhams'—but whose?) and adds that Baybars took steps to have seed-corn imported into Syria from Egypt.[117]

It is in fact very unlikely that Sanjar could have succeeded in suppressing the Frankish dirham, or in replacing it with dirhams in his own name, or that this would have solved Damascus' price problem. For one thing, if one accepts Abū Shāma's statement as to the rate at which the Frankish dirham could be exchanged against the Nāṣirī dirham (note that the latter would seem to be the Egyptian dirham issued by Saladin which was only 50% silver), then it is evident that on the basis of silver content alone, those who sold to the Damascus mint would be making a substantial and unnecessary loss. Sanjar's writ scarcely ran outside the walls of Damascus, and coins similar to the 'Jaffan' or bāqiyya dirham were circulating elsewhere, for the emir Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥimsī was alleged to have extorted 1,600,000 Beiruti dirhams from the population of Aleppo in 659/1261.[118]

Then again Sanjar's own issue of dirhams does not seem to have been a large one. Only two surviving examples have so far been discovered.[119] Even in the most favourable circumstances it was difficult to suppress 'bad' coins, and the declared reluctance of rulers like Nūr al-Dīn and Baybars to do so may have concealed their impotence. The attempts of the Circassian sultans in the fifteenth century to remove Italian coins from circulation in Egypt furnish an instructive example of the difficulties involved.[120]

Besides, the crisis in Damascus was not entirely or even mainly monetary in origin, but a product of other special circumstances. In the wake of the Mongol invasion the harvest will have been a poor one. The refugees who had taken shelter in the Crusader towns on the coast would then have returned to Damascus, and it is conceivable that it was they who brought in the large quantities of Frankish dirhams. Certainly the vengeful fine of 150,000 dirhams which the Muslims imposed on the Christians of Damascus after 'Ayn Jalūt is likely to have brought large numbers of such coins into circulation in the city.[121]

Sanjar and Baybars both struck dirhams in Damascus upon assuming control there, but between 660 and 666 there does not seem to have been any issue of silver by the Damascus mint, though copper money may well have been issued.[122] In the light of the testimony of the Arabic chroniclers quoted above, it would appear that the suspension of the minting of silver there was due to the excessive numbers of dirhams already circulating—Frankish, Egyptian and others. The resumption of minting in 666/1268 in Syria was the product perhaps of the conversion of silver acquired in the sack of Crusader towns into Muslim coinage—Jaffa and Antioch both fell in that year.

Though Frankish dirhams were alleged to have been the cause of a monetary crisis in Damascus in 658/1259-60, it is in a sense more remarkable that in other years these coins did not produce a similar stir. Superficially Abū Shāma seems to be describing the operation of Gresham's law—bad money driving out good—but it is precisely a consideration of the context of Abū Shāma's information that suggests the opposite conclusion: though locally within Damascus 'bad' Frankish money circulated from person to person with increasing rapidity like the Bottle Imp, this was only because it was expected that an attempt would be made by the authorities to suppress it that year. This would not apply in other towns and in other years. Presumably Frankish dirhams had circulated in Damascus before 658 and perhaps they continued to do so afterwards as well. As Udovitch has observed, 'In the absence of special circumstances, such as the enforcement of a state-imposed exchange rate, all coins in circulation found their own level of values and were equally good or equally bad'.[123]

Very large numbers of bāqiyya or 'Jaffan' dirhams must have been minted, yet no actual dirham has been published by numismatists which can either be assigned to Jaffa, or to the late 1250s, or, most importantly, possessing a silver content of only 15%.

To conclude, the speculative nature of most of the above must be apparent. It is disconcerting to find that the textual evidence about the issue of coins in this period matches the numismatic evidence so badly. It is not only the bāqiyya (or 'Jaffan') dirham which awaits identification, but also the Beiruti dirham, the twelfth century qirtās, the Ẓāhirī dirham issued in Anatolia, the sarracenate bezant of Armenia and the Ṣūrī dinars of the late twelfth and late thirteenth centuries. A satisfactory matching of coins and texts may not always be possible, for in some cases doubtless we are the victims of the Arab chroniclers' misunderstandings concerning their own monetary system and, in some cases, it may be that they are referring not to real moneys but to moneys of account, yet it is clear that the Arabic texts raise important questions about the circulation of imitation dinars and dirhams and the dates when these coins ceased to circulate.

NOTES

I am grateful to M. L. Bates and D. M. Metcalf for reading and criticising this paper. The errors that remain are, obstinately, my own.

1. Some excellent studies of the commerce and economy of the Crusader principalities exist and have been consulted here, notably: J. Riley-Smith, The Feudal Nobility and the Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1174-1277, 1973, pp. 62-98; idem, 'Government in Latin Syria and the commercial privileges of foreign merchants', in Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages (ed. D. Baker), Edinburgh, 1973, pp. 109-32; J. Prawer The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1972, pp. 352-415; J. Richard, Le royaume latin de Jérusalem, 1953, pp. 275-83; C. Cahen, La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche, 1940, pp. 472-500.

2. J. Sauvaget, Alep, 1941, p. 143. On the Khwarizmians in Syria and Palestine generally see R. S. Humphreys, From Saladin to the Mongols, New York, 1977, pp. 269-71, 274-5.

3. Though of course it is true that from the 11th century onwards there had been some Turkoman settlement in Syria. See F. Sumer, Oguzlar, Ankara, 1967, pp. 132f.; C. Cahen, op. cit. pp. 473f.

4. 'L'Estoire d'Eracles', RHC Occ. II, p. 435.; 'Continuation de Guillaume de Tyr, de 1229 à 1261, dite du manuscrit de Rothelin', RHC Occ. II, p. 623f.; Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitalliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem (ed. J. Delaville Le Roulx), 1894-1906, II, no. 2605, pp. 726f.; 'Annales monasterii Burtonensis' (ed. H. R. Luard), in Annales monastici, I, p. 371.

5. 'L'Estoire d'Eracles' pp. 437, 445; Les Gestes de Chiprois (ed. G. Raynaud), Geneva, 1887, p. 445; 'Annales de Terre Sainte' (ed. R. Röhricht and G. Raynaud), in Archives de l'Orient Latin II, 1884, 443, 449-51.

6. Abū al-Fidā, al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar, Cairo, n.d. III, p. 212.

7. Humphreys, op. cit., pp. 341, 343, 347, 362.

8. Maqrīzī, Kitāb al-Sulūk (ed. M. M. Ziada), Cairo, 1934-58, I, ii, pp. 689f.

9. I. M. Lapidus, Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages, Cambridge, Massachussets, 1967, pp. 13-4, 50.

10. E. Ashtor, A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages, 1976, p. 285.

11. G. L. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, Urkunden zur alteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte Venedig etc (3 vols, Fontes Rerum Austriacarum, XII–XIV), Vienna, 1856-7, XIII, pp. 62-6, 256-60, 274-6, XIV, pp. 60-2.

12. Lapidus, op. cit., pp. 14f.

13. Ibn Shaddād, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm, 'Alāq al-Khatīra (BM. MS Add. 23,334), passim.

14. On the importance of refugees in this period, see Ashtor, op. cit., pp. 289f; and Lapidus, op. cit., p. 84 and n. 13.

15. Ashtor, op. cit., pp. 262f.

16. Marco Polo, The Description of the World (ed. A. C. Moule and P. Pelliot), 1938, p. 100.

17. Ashtor, op. cit., pp. 244, 289; Lapidus, op. cit., p. 13 and n. 9; D. Haldane, Mamluk Painting, Warminster, 1978, p. 6.

18. J. Richard, 'La Confrèrie des Mosserins d'Acre et les marchands de Mossoul au XIIIe siècle', L'Orient Syrien XI (1966), 451-8. J. Riley-Smith, 'A Note on confraternities in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research XLIV (1971), 303-8.

19. C. Cahen 'La "Chronique des Ayyoubides" d'al-Makīn b. al-'Amīd,' Bulletin des Études Orientales XV (1955), 172.

20. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd al-Ẓāhir (ed. A. Khowaiter), Riyad, 1976, p.308.

21. M. Rogers, 'Evidence for Mamluk-Mongol Relations 1260-1360', in Colloque internationale sur l'histoire du Caire, Cairo, 1969, pp. 385-404.

22. Sauvaget, op. cit., p. 143.

23. D. Ayalon, 'On one of the works of Jean Sauvaget', Israel Oriental Studies I (1971), 299-302.

24. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 221.; D. S. Margoliouth, Cairo, Jerusalem and Damascus, 1907, pp. 208-11.

25. R. S. Lopez, 'L'attività economica di Genova nel Marzo 1253 secondo gli atti notarili del tempo', Atti della Societa Ligure di Storia di Patria LXIV (1935), 163-270; M. Balard, 'Les Génois en Romanie entre 1204 et 1261', Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire LXXVIII (1966) 467-502; H. L. Misbach, 'Genoese commerce and the alleged flow of gold to the East, 1154-1253', Revue Internationale de l'Histoire de la Banque III (1970), 67-87.

26. J. Riley-Smith, What Were the Crusades? 1977, p. 45. On the continuing expenses of the French crown in Outremer, ibid., pp. 67f., and J. R. Strayer, 'The Crusades of Louis IX' in A History of the Crusades, II (ed. R. L. Wolff and H. W. Hazard), University of Wisconsin, 2nd edn., 1969, p. 508.

27. See below, p. 82 and n. 54.

28. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd al-Ẓāhir, p. 171; idem, Tashrīf al-Ayyām, (ed. M. Kamil), Cairo, 1961, pp. 165-7; Maqrīzī, Sulūk, I, ii, 621; W. Heyd, Histoire du commerce du Levant au moyen âge, Leipzig, 1923, II, p. 417.

29. See below, p. 83 and n. 65.

30. L. T. Belgrano, 'Trattato del Sultano d'Egitto col Commune di Genova nel MCCLXXXX' , Atti della Societa di Storia Patria di Ligure XIX (1887), 161-75; cf. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, Tashrīf, pp. 165-8.

31. Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, XIII, pp. 336-41, 416-8, 483-92; M. Amari, I diplomi arabi del R. Archivio Fiorentino, Florence, 1863, pp. 283, 285-7.

32. Clauses in the two Pisan agreements, the Venetian agreement of 1238 and the Genoese agreement are explicit on this.

33. Maqrīzī, Sulūk, I, ii, p. 304.

34. L. de Mas-Latrie, Traités de paix et de commerce, supplement, 1872, pp. 81f. ('Seme' must be read as 'Sham' i.e. Syria).

35. Amari, I diplomi, pp. 70f.

36. J. Riley-Smith, The Knights of St. John in Jerusalem and Cyprus c. 1050-1310, 1967, pp. 439f.

37. 'A crusader's letter from the Holy Land' in Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society V, 1890, p. 13.

38. U. and M. C. Lyons and J. Riley-Smith, Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders, Cambridge, 1971, I, p. 81, II, p. 82; Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 96, 118, 187. (It is possible that some of the grain harvested in Palestine in 662/1264 was sold in Egypt, as there was a famine there in that year and a consequent monetary crisis. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 188-90 and see above, p. 85). On the grain trade between Egypt and Syria generally, see Lapidus, Muslim Cities, pp. 51f. and idem, 'The grain ecomony of Mamluk Egypt' , Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient XII (1969), 1-15.

39. Richard, Le royaume latin, pp. 276, 278; Riley-Smith, The Feudal Nobility, p. 79.

40. Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ al-Ā'shā, Cairo, 1919-20, XIV, pp. 31-9. On this treaty and those from Qalqashandī listed below, see W. Bjorkmann, Beitrage zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei, Hamburg, 1928, pp. 172f.

41. Qalqashandī, op. cit., XIV, pp. 39-42.

42. Op. cit., XIV, 42-51.

43. Ibn al-Furāt, Tārīkh al-duwwal wa al-mulūk (ed. Q. Zurayk), Beirut, 1942, VII, pp. 205f.

44. Qalqashandī, op. cit., XIV, pp. 51-63; P. M. Holt, 'Qalāwūn's treaty with Acre in 1283' , English Historical Review XCI (1976), 808-12.

45. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, Tashrīf, pp. 103-10.

46. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 282, 378, 383.

47. Ibn al-Furāt, Tārīkh al-duwwal wa al-mulūk, VIII (ed. Q. Zurayk and N. Izz al-Din), Beirut, 1939, p. 2. On the location of al-Rūhā see G. Beyer, 'Die Kreuzfahrergebiete Akko und Galilea', Zeitschrift für deutschen Palästinavereins LXVII (1945), 239.

48. See above and Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 225f.

49. Ibn al-Furāt, Tārīkh, VIII, pp. 63f. ; Maqrīzī, Sulūk, I, iii, pp. 739, 741f.

50. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 122, 158; Ibn al-Furāt, Tārīkh, VII, p. 266; Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders, I, p. 216, II, pp. 99f.; Riley-Smith, Feudal Nobility, pp. 62f.

51. Lapidus, Muslim Cities, pp. 120-9; idem, 'The grain economy', passim.

52. M. Canard, 'Un traité entre Byzance et l'Egypte au XIIIe siècle', in Mélanges Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Cairo, 1935-45, pp. 210f.

53. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 256, 283-4, 299.

54. H. Rabie, The Financial System of Egypt A. H. 564-741/A.D. 1169-1341, 1972, pp. 42-4. On the variety of forms of iqṭā', see R. Irwin, 'Iqṭā' and the end of the Crusader states', in The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades (ed. P. M. Holt), Warminster, 1977, pp. 62-73.

55. Encyclopaedia of Islam (2nd edition) s.v. 'Khalīl' (U. Haarman). The view, found elsewhere, that the merchants of Alexandria urged the Sultan Qalāwūn to remove a commercial rival by attacking the Crusader port of Lattakia in 1287 rests upon Reinaud's unsupported opinion (in Bibliothèque des Croisades, IV, pp. 560f.), as it is not to be found in Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir's Tashrīf or Maqrīzī's Kitāb al-Sulūk, the two sources Reinaud seems to have been using on the capture of Lattakia.

56. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 400; Heyd, Histoire du commerce, I, p. 420.

57. Heyd, op. cit., I, pp. 415f.

58. Qalqashandī, op. cit., XIV, pp. 72-8; Canard 'Un traité', pp. 210f.

59. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, Tashrīf, pp. 92-103.

60. Op. cit., 156-164.

61. C. Desimoni, 'Actes passés en 1271, 1274 et 1279 à Aïas (Petite Arménie) et à Beyrouth par devant des notaires génois', Archives de l'Orient latin, I (1881), 434, 441f.

62. On Lattakia's status in the Ayyubid period and on the Venetian colony in Muslim Lattakia, see Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, XIII, pp. 65,258; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp. 343f.

63. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 445f.; Ibn al-Furāt, Tārīkh, VII, p. 34.

64. Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p. 479; J. Heers, Gênes au XVe siècle, 1961, p. 349; F. Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, I, 1972, pp. 103-8.

65. Desimoni, op. cit.; Riley-Smith, Feudal Nobility, p. 79.

66. A. Lombardo and R. Morozzo della Rocca (ed.) Nuovi documenti del commercio Veneto dei secoli XI-XIII (Monumenti Storici, (new series) VII) 1953, pp. 74f.

67. On the commercial importance of Cilician Armenia in this period see Heyd, op. cit., I, pp. 365-72, II, pp. 73-92; Desimoni, op. cit.; P. Z. Bedoukian, The Coinage of Cilician Armenia, New York, 1962, pp. 25-87.

68. C. A. Owen, 'Scandal in the Egyptian Treasury', International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies XIV (1955), 17. On the profits of the Egyptian mint generally see Rabie, The Financial System of Egypt, pp. 115-7.

69. Ibn al-Shihna, "Les Perles choisies" d'Ibn ach-Chihna (ed. J. Sauvaget), Beirut, 1933, p. 165.

70. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 190.

71. Ibn al-Suqā'ī, Tālī Kitāb Wafayāt al-A'yān, (ed. and tr. by J. Sublet), Damascus, 1974, pp. 30f.

72. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 208.

73. Op. cit., p. 467.

74. Abū Shāma, Kitāb al-Rawdatayn fi Akhbār al-Dawlatayn, Cairo, 1870, I, p. 14. Cf. N. Elisséef, Nur al-Din, un grand prince musulman au temps des croisades, Damascus, 1967, III, p. 817.

75. The literature on Egyptian coinage in this period is vast, but there is little consensus on even its most basic features. The following have been found particularly useful here: E. Ashtor, Les métaux précieux et la balance des payements du Proche-Orient à la basse époque, 1971; J. L. Bacharach, 'The dinar versus the ducat', International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies IV (1973) 77-96; J. L. Bacharach and A. A. Gordus, 'Studies in the fineness of silver coins', Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, XI (1968), 298-317; P. Balog, The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria, New York, 1964; idem, 'The history of the dirham, from the Fatimid conquest until the collapse of the Mamluk Empire', RN[6] III (1961), 109-46; M. L. Bates, 'The coinage of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars I, additions and corrections', ANSMN XXII (1977), 161-81; A. S. Ehrenkreutz, 'Contributions to the knowledge of the fiscal administration of Egypt', Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies XVI (1954), 502-14; G. Henneqin, 'Points de vue sur l'histoire monetaire de l'Egypte musulmane', Annales Islamologiques XII (1974), 1-36; idem, 'Nouveaux aperçus sur l'histoire monétaire de l'Egypte à la fin du moyen âge', ibidem, XIII (1977), 179-215.

S. Labib, Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens Spatmittelalter (1171-1517), Wiesbaden, 1965, ch. viii, 'Geld und Kredit', pp. 261-85; Rabie, op. cit.

76. On Syrian money in this period, see the works listed above; also: P. Balog, 'The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans: additions and corrections', ANSMN XVI (1970), pp. 113-71; idem, 'Un fals d'al-Kamil Shams al-Din Sunqor, Sultan Mamelouk rebelle de Damas', RN[6] XI (1969), 296-9; A. Berman, 'The turbulent events in Syria in 658-9/1260, reflected by three hitherto unpublished dirhems', Numismatic Circular LXXXIV (1976), 314-16; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp. 469-71.

77. C. Cahen, 'Notes sur l'histoire des croisades et de l'Orient latin. III. Orient latin et commerce du Levant', Bulletin de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg XXIX (1951), 337.

78. Balog, 'A history of the dirham', p. 144.

79. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 227.

80. On the dinar-dirham exchange rate, see: Ashtor, Les metaux precieux, p. 37; A.S. Ehrenkreutz, 'The standard of fineness of gold coins circulating in Egypt at the time of the Crusades', Journal of the American Oriental Society LXXIV (1954), 163; idem, 'Contributions to the knowledge', pp. 504f; S. D. Goitein, 'The exchange rate of gold and silver moneys in Fatimid and Ayyubid times: a preliminary study of the relevant Geniza material', Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient VIII (1965), 1-46.

81. Abū Shāma, Tarājim Rijāl al-Qarnein (ed. Kauthari), Cairo, 1947, p. 168. Cf. Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p. 470n.; A. M. Watson, 'Back to gold—and silver', Economic History Review[2] XX (1967), 27.

82. M. L. Bates, 'Thirteenth century crusader imitations of Ayyubid silver coinage: a preliminary survey' in Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History. Studies in Honor of George C. Miles (ed. D. Koumijyan), Beirut, 1974, pp. 393-409, at p. 406.

83. Humphreys, From Saladin to the Mongols, p. 249.

84. Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyā, Tārīḫ Bayrūt, Beirut, 1969, pp. 108f.

85. R. S. Lopez, 'Back to gold, 1252', Economic History Review[2] XX (1956-7), 219-40; A. M. Watson, 'Back to gold—and silver', Economic History Review[2], XX (1967), 1-34. See also H. L. Misbach, 'Genoese commerce and the alleged flow of gold to the East, 1154-1253', Revue Internationale de l'Histoire de la Banque III (1970), 67-87.

86. Tafel and Thomas, Urkunden, XIII, 62-6, 336-41, XIV, 483-92.

87. Belgrano, op. cit. (note 30); see also L. Blancard, Essaie sur les monnaies de Charles Ier, 1868, pp. 489f., 541f.

88. Bedoukian, op. cit., pp. 27f, 45; H. Lavoix, Monnaies à legendes Arabes frappées en Syrie par les croisés, 1887, pp. 59f.

89. On transfers of bullion and coins from the West, see in particular Watson, op. cit., pp. 7-9.

90. The literature on these imitations is extensive. The following have been used here: P. Balog and J. Yvon, 'Monnaies à legendes Arabes de l'Orient Latin', RN[6] I (1958), 133-68; Bates, 'Thirteenth century crusader imitations of Ayyubid silver coinage', pp. 393-409; P. Grierson, 'A rare crusader bezant with the Christus Vincit legend', ANSMN VI (1954), 169-78; Lavoix, op. cit.; Prawer, op. cit., pp. 385-7; G. Schlumberger, Numismatique de l'Orient Latin, 1887, pp. 130-43.

91. Lopez, 'Back to gold'. pp. 227f.

92. L. Y. A. Rahmani, 'A fourteenth century hoard from Tiberias' Israel Numismatic Journal II (1964), 47-55; J. Yvon, 'Monnaies et sceaux de l'Orient Latin', RN[6] VIII (1966), at p. 91.

93. Balog, 'A history of the dirham', p. 149.

94. Ibn al-Suqā'ī, loc. cit.

95. For views on the Ṣūrī dinar, see Ehrenkreutz, 'The standard of fineness', p. 163n.; Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, pp. 469f.; Balog and Yvon, 'Monnaies à legendes Arabes', p. 136n; Misbach, 'Genoese commerce', pp. 75f.

96. Qazwīnī, Athār al-Bilād, Baghdad, 1960, p. 217.

97. G. Le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, Beirut, 1965, pp. 1f.

98. Ibn Khallikān, Biographical Dictionary (tr. and ed. M. de Slane), Paris, 1843-71, III, p. 456.

99. Owen, 'Scandal in the Egyptian Treasury', p. 76. Ehrenkreutz's opinion ('The Standard of fineness', p. 163 and n.) that the early thirteenth-century treatise on the mint by Ibn Ba'ra described Ṣūrī dinars sold to the Egyptian mint as being over 90% fine appears to be based on a misreading of 'Ṣūrī' for 'Yaqūbī'. I am grateful to Mr. M. L. Bates for drawing my attention to this. I have not found it possible to consult A. Fahmi's edition of Ibn Ba'ra's Kitāb Kashf al-Asrār, Cairo, 1966, on this point.

100. Al-Shayzārī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Naṣr, Kitāb Nihayāt al-Rutba fī Ṭalab al-Hisba (ed. al-Arīni), Cairo, 1946, pp. 74f. On al-Shayzārī see Encyclopaedia of Islam (2nd ed.) s.v. 'Ḥisba' (C. Cahen and M. Talbi).

101. Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh Leiden, 1851-76, XI, p. 184.

102. Ibn al-Athīr, op. cit., XI, p. 186, XII, p. 23; Bahā al-Dīn ibn Shaddād, 'Ancedotes et Beaux traits de la Vie du Sultan Youssof' RHC Or. III, 195f.

103. Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥya, Tārīḫ Bayrūt, p. 156.

104. Qalqashandī, op. cit., XIV, pp. 31-9.

105. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, pp. 383, 447.

106. C. Desimoni, 'Actes passés', pp. 457, 491; RRH nos. 1355, 1396, 1398.

107. Qalqashandī, op. cit, XIV, p. 36; Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 274.

108. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Rawd, p. 282; Shafī b. 'Alī, Ḥusn al-Manāqib (ed. A. Khowaiter), Riyad, 1976, p. 121.

109. Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, Tashrīf, p. 108.

110. Desimoni, op. cit. See also RRH, index s.v. 'bisantius sarrazenatus'.

111. Al-Shayzārī, Kitāb Nihayāt al-Rutba, pp. 75f.

112. For (conflicting) views on the qirtās, see Elisséeff, Nur al-Din, III, pp. 817, 874.; E. Ashtor, 'Le cout de la vie dans la Syrie mediévale', Arabica VIII (1961), 63f., 69.

113. On this episode see also Cahen, La Syrie du Nord, p. 471 and n.; Ashtor, Les métaux précieux, p. 36.

114. Abū Shāma, Mudhayl 'alā al-Rawdatayn, MS. B. M., Or. 1539, f. 123b; idem in RHC Or., V, p. 203; idem, Tarājim, p. 211.

115. Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders, I, p. 51 and n., p. 223, II, p. 42 and n., p. 192.

116. Maqrīzī, Sulūk, I, ii, pp. 434, 442, 446.

117. Ibn al-Suqā'ī, Tālī, p. 66.

118. al-Yunīnī, Dhayl al-Mir'āt al-Zamān, Hyderabad, 1955, I, p. 440, II, p. 93.

119. Berman, op. cit.

120. Bacharach, 'The dinar versus the ducat', passim; W. Popper, Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957, II, p. 47.

121. See above page 75 and 'Chronique des Ayyoubides', p. 176; Maqrīzī, Sulūk, I, ii, p. 443.

122. Bates, 'The coinage of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars', pp. 167, 171.

123. A. L. Udovitch reviewing Balog's Coinage of the Mamluk Sultans, in Journal of the American Oriental Society XC (1970), 290.

III

The Mamlūk Conquest of the County of Tripoli

THE INTERNAL history of the county of Tripoli in the last decades of its existence, in the second half of the thirteenth century, is a complex story. It involves the factional interests and shifting alignments of the counts of Tripoli, the Commune of Tripoli, the local baronage, the military Orders, the Genoese, the Roman court party and several rival ecclesiastics.[1] It is probable that contemporary and later Arab chroniclers who had occasion to refer to that history sometimes lost their way. Some of what follows should be judged as *curiosa* – as a collection of Arab misapprehensions about what was going on. Some of it, nevertheless, would appear to be both true and interesting.

Bohemond VI, prince of Antioch and count of Tripoli, died in 1275. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Yūnīnī, the chronicler and necrologist who lived and wrote in Baalbec and Damascus (1242-1326), provided an obituary of the count in his *Dhayl al-Mir'at al-Zamān*. According to al-Yūnīnī, Bohemond died sometime in the first ten days of Ramaḍān 673 (February 28 – March 9 1275) and was buried in the church in Tripoli. 'He was good looking and pleasant in appearance', al-Yūnīnī added. 'I saw him myself in Baalbec in the year 658/1260. He was in attendance on Kit-buqa Noyon and he went up to the Baalbec citadel and residency (*dār*). He had decided to ask for it (Baalbec) from Hülegü and offer him what would please him for it. When this became known about Bohemond, the inhabitants were disturbed and their grief increased.' However, as al-Yūnīnī pointed out, this never came to pass because of the subsequent Mongol defeat at 'Ayn Jālūt. Later when Qalāwūn took Tripoli in 688/1289, the bones of this Bohemond were exhumed and strewn about the streets.[2]

By the time Bohemond VI died, there was little left of either the principality or the county. In the principality of Antioch the great Hospitaller fortress of Marqab was effectively a law unto itself. Bohemond's authority had been restricted to a contentious partition with the Mamlūks of authority and revenues of the port of Latakia and its environs.

The possessions which the young Bohemond VII inherited from his father can be deduced from a treaty which he made with the Mamlūk Sultan Qalāwūn on July 16 1281 – the town of Tripoli itself and the thin coastal strip running south, including Nephin, Botrun (which was in ruins) and Jubayl. To the north of Tripoli and the River Barīd, the counts still held 'Arqa and al-Qulay'a, but land communication with these possessions was via a Mamlūk guardpost on the Artusia Bridge.[3] Further north yet the Templar fortress of Tortosa was not really responsive to the count's authority and, like Marqab, negotiated separate treaties with the Mamlūks. In the 1281 treaty, the highlands in the hinterland of the county were (realistically) not listed as belonging to either side. They were inhabited by *jabalīyūn* (hillsmen or *montagnards*), some of them, like the uniate Maronites, friendly to the Franks, others not so friendly.

As a result then of Baybars's relentless campaigning and sabre rattling the counts had lost a great deal, including control of the crucial al-Buqa'īya Gap between Ḥimṣ and Tripoli. The chronicler al-Nuwayrī (1279-1332) claimed, somewhat implausibly, that sometime in the late 1260s Bohemond VI took ship (to a Cilician port presumably) and went on to the court of the

Ilkhān Abaqa to complain that the Mongols were not protecting him from the terrible Baybars. It was alleged that Abaqa had him thrown to the ground and flogged for his temerity.[4]

Krak des Chevaliers had been in the hands of the Hospitallers until 1268. Subsequently it became the base for Mamlūk operations against Frankish possessions in the north. In 1285 the centre of Mamlūk operations was moved to al-Marqab which was given a garrison of 1,000 troopers, 150 emirs and numerous auxiliaries.[5]

Bohemond VI's attenuated overlordship in the county of Tripoli had been further weakened by a struggle with the Embriaco lord of Jubayl. The Embriaco clan were of Genoese descent and, in 1258, they ignored Bohemond's orders to support the Venetians in the Venetian-Genoese warfare then going on in the streets of Acre. Instead they fought, ultimately unsuccessfully, on the side of the Genoese. Bohemond later had Bertrand, the leader of the Embriaco contingent, assassinated by Syrian peasants.

In 1277 open warfare recommenced this time between Bohemond VII and Guy II of Embriaco, lord of Jubayl. The *casus belli* was Guy's attempt to marry his brother to an heiress of the Salaman family. In 1277 and 1278 Guy planned attacks against Tripoli which were abortive. In these attacks he was supported by the Templars as well as by his large clan of relatives. These early affrays were not noted by the Arab chroniclers. However al-Yūnīnī did note that there was open warfare between Bohemond on one side and the lord of Jubayl and the Templars on the other in Rabi' I 678/July-August 1279.[6] Moreover he provided further information about the third and final attempt against Tripoli in 1282, in his obituary of Guy of Jubayl. Since obituaries of crusader lords are not common in Arabic sources, a translation of this passage is given here:

> In this year (681/1282) Sir Guy died. He was a famous knight among the Franks beloved by them for his boldness and generosity and he was one of the greatest knights in Tripoli. They tended to support him against its lord. He wrote to them and they to him until it was agreed that when he appeared, they would surrender the town to him. There was the fiercest emnity between Guy and the lord of Tripoli. Sir Guy eventually got in touch with the Sultan Qalāwūn, via the Emir Sayf al-Dīn Balabān al-Ṣālihī (the governor of Krak des Chevaliers at the time) and Guy promised that, once he had taken Tripoli, he would partition it with Qalāwūn. He asked that he should be assisted by Muslim *jabalīyūn* (hillsmen), for they were neighbours of his. The *nūwāb* (Mamlūk governors) agreed and they returned to him with a robe of honour. Then in late Shawwāl or early Dhū' l-Qada (February) Sir Guy and his followers set off by sea. Entering Tripoli's harbour by night, they disembarked and entered the town. They knocked at the gates of those they had written to but those men did not join them. This was because the lord of Tripoli had received warning and taken precautions. Guy arrived at the palace of the lord of Tripoli where he was told 'the lord of Tripoli has got wind of the plot, so withdraw'. But Guy did not. When the lord of Tripoli knew of their entry into the town, he sallied out with his servants, followers and knights in their squadrons and they took captive those whom they overcame. As for Guy, he headed for the Templar house looking for protection there. Then the lord of Tripoli arrived and took him away from there after developments it would be tedious to relate. He sent them (the captives) to Nephin and imprisoned them there. As for Guy and his intimate companions, it is said that Bohemond drowned them three days later. He also sent his servants to seize Jubayl which now became his in addition to Tripoli and its dependencies. As for the *jabalīyūn*, they remained in prison until Qalāwūn was besieging Marqab (1285) when the lord of Tripoli sent an embassy, but Qalāwūn refused to hear his message. So the lord of Tripoli was forced to hand them over to Qalāwūn at Marqab.[7]

Al-Yūnīnī's account of Guy's last ill-fated attack tallies fairly closely with the trial deposition drawn up at Nephin under Bohemond's supervision on February 18 before Guy's execution.[8] What is new though is al-Yūnīnī's assertion that there was Muslim participation on the Embriaco side that was sponsored by the Mamlūk sultan. From a reference in the *Manhal al-Ṣāfī* by Ibn Taghrībirdī (1411-1470), we learn that the *jabalīyūn* sent to assist Guy came from Baalbec and the Biqā'.[9] (This was a well known recruiting ground for Muslim

infantry. Hayton of Armenia singled out the foot serjeantry of Baalbec for special mention.[10] There are also frequent mentions in Mamlūk chronicles to their fighting role in Syrian internal strife.)

Al-Yūnīnī's chronicle for the year 684/1285 has not yet been published, and remains inaccessible to me, but other chroniclers, al-Jazarī (1260-1338), Ibn al-Dawādarī (*c.* 1288-1336) al-Dhahabī (1274-1348) and Ibn Taghrībirdī, here as elsewhere almost certainly quoting al-Yūnīnī, noted that in Rabī' I 684/May-June 1285, after Qalāwūn's successful siege of Hospitaller Marqab and the initially unsuccessful investment of Maraclea, the Sultan was successful in threatening Count Bohemond to bribe its lord to abandon Maraclea and to hand over the *jabalīyūn* prisoners who had been with the lord of Jubayl and who had since been imprisoned in Maraclea's tower.[11]

As Bohemond's recourse to bribery makes plain, the lord of Maraclea did not consider himself to be Bohemond's subject. It is difficult to identify this lord with confidence. Earlier in the thirteenth century Maraclea had been held by lay lords of the Ravendel family. In the 1240s and 1250s Bohemond and the Hospitallers had disputed suzerainty over the place, but western sources do not allow us to determine the outcome of that dispute.[12] During the reign of Baybars Maraclea came into the hands of the lord whom the Arabic sources agree in calling Bartholomew. This Bartholomew cannot be identified with any known member of the Ravendel clan. At some time between 1269 and 1271 Maraclea was captured by a Mamlūk army and Bartholomew, who had been noted for his espousal of pro-Mongol policies, fled to the Mongol court of Tabrīz. Baybars sent Ismā'īlīs to assassinate him there in 1271 and he was told that they had been successful in their mission. However in 1279 or 1280, some two years after Baybars's death, Bartholomew returned to Maraclea. He seems to have been under Hospitaller patronage. Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir described his flight as having been prompted by the fall of Krak des Chevaliers and now when he returned to Maraclea he was assisted by the Hospitallers to build a new castle on the coast. However he cannot have been a Hospitaller himself, for he had a son whom he allegedly murdered for entering into negotiations with Qalāwūn for the surrender of Maraclea.[13]

Curiouser and curiouser, Ibn Taghrībirdī (presumably drawing once more upon al-Yūnīnī's chronicle) opens his account of the conquest of Tripoli in 688/1289 by observing that previously 'conflict had broken out between the lord of Tripoli and Sir Tuluma (Bartholomew), who had been a follower of the lord of that castle which the lord of Tripoli had destroyed to please Qalāwūn, as already related (i.e. Maraclea). So there was emnity for this reason between him and the Lord of Tripoli. The lord of the castle died and Bartholomew asked Qalāwūn for help, requesting that the Emir Balabān al-Ṭabākhī al-Silāḥdār be instructed to help him take Tripoli. There should be a partition and he (Bartholomew) promised a lot. He was given assistance in this until he had achieved what he wanted but he then realised that the Franks would not accept what he had promised the sultan.'[14] Qalāwūn's own successful siege of Tripoli in 1289 followed on from Bartholomew's reneging.

Ibn Taghrībirdī's Sir Tuluma from Maraclea must be identified with that Bartholomew, known to us from western sources, who was a member of a cadet branch of the Embriaco clan, who married Helvis of Scandelion, whose brother William was drowned or buried alive by Bohemond in 1282, who became mayor and leader of the Commune of Tripoli after Bohemond VII's death in 1287, who then sought to acquire effective control of Jubayl by marriages with the senior Embriaco line and who was drowned while seeking to escape from Tripoli in 1289. Despite Ibn Taghrībirdī's claim to the contrary, it is tempting to speculate that the Bartholomew who fled from Baybars to the Mongol court and the Bartholomew who was prepared to seek an alliance with Qalāwūn are in fact the same man.[15] Whether this is the

case or not, the above account suggests that Bartholomew of Embriaco must have been at least party to the imprionment of Guy of Embriaco's unlucky Muslim allies. Either there are large and crucial gaps in western accounts of the story of the Embriaco feud with the counts of Tripoli or Muslim observers of these events were seriously confused.

The employment of dissident Embriaco gentry and local hillsmen was part of Qalāwūn's 'quiet war' against Tripoli in the early 1280s. A more vigorous offensive policy on the part of the sultan was interdicted by the existence of a rebel Mamlūk principality in north-west Syria controlled by the Emir Sunqur al-Ashqar in Ṣahyūn. Only after the removal of Sunqur from Ṣahyūn in the spring of 1287 was Qalāwūn able to contemplate a direct assault on Tripoli.[16]

The Mamlūk conquest of Tripoli in 1289 marked the beginning rather than the end of Mamlūk attempts to control the region. Frankish settlement survived the fall of Tripoli by some years. Lucy, Bohemond's sister was allowed to keep a couple of estates. A 'son' of Guy II was allowed to keep Jubayl.[17] Although there was a son of Guy's called Peter he was still a minor and it would appear from Maronite sources that the man who held Jubayl after 1289 was called John and he may still have been on the mainland as late as 1302.[18] This John – really the last of the crusader lords – was perhaps John of Antioch who had married Guy of Embriaco's daughter Catherine and was therefore Peter's older brother-in-law.[19] In 1291 after the Mamlūk conquest of Acre, an emir was sent to destroy the fortifications of Jubayl, but he left its inhabitants, explicitly identified as Genoese, undisturbed.[20] Very likely, many of these were among the Christians evacuated to Cyprus in a Genoese galley in 1300.[21]

Much more important, with the Franks out of the way, the Mamlūks were able to turn to deal with the larger problem – the turbulent hillsmen of the Maronite, Druze, Mutāwila and Nusayrī communities. The Mamlūk conquest of the Lebanon and northern Syria was perhaps completed by 1305, though their hegemony was to be seriously challenged once more by the Nusayrī revolt of 1316.[22]

NOTES

1 On this history, see in particular J. Richard, 'Les comtes de Tripoli et leurs vassaux', elsewhere in this volume.

2 Al-Yūnīnī, *Dhayl mir'at al-zamān* (Hyderabad, 1954-61), iii, 92-3.

3 Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-fikra*, excerpted in al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk* ed. M.M. Ziada, i, pt.iii (Cairo, 1970), 975-7; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rīkh al-duwal wa al-mulūk* vii, ed. Q. Zurayq (Beirut, 1942), 204-5.

4 Quoted in Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī al-Faḍā'il, *al-Nahj al-sadīd wa al-durr al-farīd*, ed. and trans. by E. Blochet, 'Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks', *Patrologia Orientalis*, xii (1912), 537.

5 Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa al-'uṣūr fi sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr* (Cairo, 1961), 80.

6 Yūnīnī, *Dhayl*, iv, 4.

7 *op. cit.*, iv, 171-2.

8 L. de Mas-Latrie, *Histoire de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan* (Paris, 1852-61), iii, 662-8.

9 Cited by E.M. Quatremère in *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Egypte* (Paris, 1837-45), i, pt.ii, 37n.

10 Hayton, 'La flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient', *RHC Arm.*, ii, 224.

11 Al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh al-Islām*, Istanbul, Aya Sofya MS. 3014, f.195b; texts and translations of al-Jazarī and Ibn al-Dawādārī in U. Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970), 223-4, (Arabic) 58-9; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fi mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhira* (Cairo, 1929-56), vii, 315-17.

12 On the vexed question of Maraclea's lordship, see J. Riley-Smith, *The Knights of St John in Jerusalem and Cyprus c.1050-1310* (London, 1967), 431-2, 452.

13 Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *al-Rawḍ al-zāhir*, ed. 'A. Khuwayṭir (al-Riyāḍ, 1976) 395; *idem*, Tashrīf, pp.87-9; Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, i, pt.ii, 600. In the 1281 treaty between Bohemond VII and Qalāwūn referred to above, Maraclea is referred to as being in Muslim possession. See Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, i, pt.iii, 975; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rīkh*, vii, 205.

14 Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, vii, 320-1. See also M. Reinaud in J.F. Michaud, *Bibliothèque des Croisades* (Paris, 1829), iv, 561.

15 On Bartholomew of Embriaco, see E.G. Rey, 'Les seigneurs de Gíblet', *ROL*, iii (1895), 411-13; J. Richard, 'Le comté de Tripoli dans les chartes du fonds des Porcellet', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, cxxx (1972), 356. On Bartholomew's death, see Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf*, p.165.

16 On the career of Sunqur al-Ashqar, see in particular Ibn al-Ṣuqā'ī, *Tālī kitāb wafayāt al-a'yān* ed. and trans. by J. Sublet (Damascus, 1974), 107-9; Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Tashrīf*, index *s.v.* 'al-Ashqar'; P. Balog 'A dirhem of al-Kamil Shams al-Din Sunqor, rebel Sultan of Syria', *Revue Numismatique*, xi (1969) 296-9.

17 Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rīkh al-duwal wa al-mulūk*, viii, eds. Q. Zurayq and N. 'Izz al-Dīn (Beirut, 1939), 80; Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, i. pt. iii, 748.

18 K.S. Salibi, *Maronite Historians of Medieval Lebanon* (Beirut, 1959), 67-9, 71 and n.

19 Rey, 'Les seigneurs', p.407; Richard, 'Le comté', pp.378-9n.

20 Ṣālih ibn Yahya, *Ta'rīkh Bayrūt* eds. F. Hours and K. Salibi (Beirut, 1969), 24; Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh*, f.204 b-205a; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa jāmi'al-ghurar*, viii, ed. U. Haarmann (Cairo, 1971), 312. According to Dhahabī, the Sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl had first requested the lord of Jubayl to destroy his own citadel, but subsequently a Mamlūk officer was sent to do the job.

21 G. Hill, *A History of Cyprus* (Cambridge, 1940-52), ii, 213.

22 On the pacification of the Kasrawan region, see Salibi, *Medieval Historians*, pp.72-4, 113-21, 144; D.P. Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography* (Wiesbaden, 1970), index *s.v.* 'Kasrawan'. On the Mahdist uprising in the Jabala region in 1316, see Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb (Cambridge, 1958), 112-13; S. Kortantamer, *Ägypten und Syrien zwischen 1317 und 1341 in der Chronik des Mufaddal b. Abī l-Faḍā'il* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1973), 52-3; P.M. Holt (trans.), *The Memoirs of a Syrian Prince: Abu'l-Fidā', Sultan of Hamāh (672-732/ 1273-1331)* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 74; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya* (Cairo, 1932-9), xiv, 83-4.

IV

Egypt, Syria and their Trading Partners 1450—1550.

A fairly clear impression of Mediterranean commerce in the early 16th century – the commodities and the directions that they travelled in across the Mediterranean – can be gained from Di Pasi's *Tariffa de i pesi e misure,* a handbook of commercial weights and measures which went through several editions in Venice between 1503 and 1540.

As far as the Levant is concerned, Alexandria, Egypt's main port, is listed as exporting to Europe the familiar spices and drugs (pepper, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, spikenard, borax, nutmeg, sal ammoniac, gum arabic, cassia, rhubarb, mace, etc., etc.). Most of these high value low bulk commodities had of course arrived in Egypt via the Red Sea from the Indies. Additionally Alexandria exported sugar, which was grown and refined in Egypt. Damietta, the other main port of the Egyptian Delta, exported the same sorts of spices as Alexandria – but was also noted for its export of ox and buffalo hides and linen. In Syria, Damascus sold spices, sugar, syrup confections, rhubarb, rice and linen, among other commodities. Presumably these goods were exported to Venice and elsewhere via Beirut. Beirut however was primarily noted as an entrepôt for Syrian grown cotton. Venetians also purchased raisins, soap and potash in Beirut; apart from its use in making soap and other substances, potash was also valued as ballast for ships which were otherwise carrying relatively light cargoes of cotton. Jaffa in the south was another port of exit for cotton. To the north Aleppo was clearly the main centre in Syria for the sale and purchase of luxury commodities. These included spices, silk – both raw and finished – and precious stones. A small proportion of the silk and of inferior quality may have been locally produced in Northern Syria. As far as the rest of the luxury goods are concerned, the presumption must be that Aleppo acted as a place of transit for goods coming from Iraq, Iran and places further east. Tripoli and Lattakia served as ports for Aleppo. They also exported cotton in bulk as well as soap, potash, sugar and bocasin cloth. The inland city of Hamah produced the best Syrian cotton and the Venetians bought much of their cotton there.

Venice exported to Egypt and Syria finished cloths of all kinds, and coin, especially silver, and various finished goods such as crystal glassware and writing paper. Of course

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Egypt and Syria also traded in the Levant with Turkey, the islands of the Eastern Mediterranean and Ragusa. For example, Alexandria sent Constantinople spices, sugar, rice and dates. Wax, silk, camlets and carpets ('tapedi') travelled in the other direction.[1] Damascus exported pepper and other spices to Constantinople, while wax and honey travelled in other directions. Sugar, rice and linen were conveyed from Damascus to Bursa; wax, honey, silks, carpets and other stuffs travelled from Bursa to Damietta, and Constantinople also sent wax and carpets to Damietta.[2] Damietta sent spices, sugar and linen to North Africa. It sent spices, rice and linen and salt fish to Cyprus, and spices, rice, salt fish and ox hide to Rhodes.

As far as North Africa was concerned Egypt was heavily dependent on Venetian shipping for the exchange of commodities with Tunis and (North African) Tripoli. It was mainly spices that travelled westwards from Egypt to Tunis and Tripoli. On the other hand, gold dust and carpets, among other things, travelled back to Egypt. ('Di Tunise, e Tripoli si tragono per Alesandria, oro Barbaresco, e capeti & alcune altre robbe').[3] Tripoli and Tunis also exported carpets to Corfu and Romania as well as such products as dates and rice. However they are not listed as sending carpets to Constantinople; rather they imported carpets as well as silk and other commodities from Constantinople.[4]

What emerges from Di Pasi's manual then is that Egypt imported carpets from Turkey and North Africa, while Syria also imported carpets from Turkey, and that neither Egypt or Syria was noted as an exporter of carpets. On the other hand Di Pasi did note Tunis, Tripoli, Bursa, Istanbul, Ragusa, Chios and Rhodes as being places where carpets could be purchased and shipped to the west.

The broad picture of Mediterranean commerce appears clearly in Di Pasi's manual. As far as carpets are concerned, the picture is an intriguing one. Di Pasi's testimony must be compared with those of other sources, and it will be necessary also to broaden the scope of the enquiry by looking at the development of industry and international commerce by the Mamluk Sultanate prior to the 16th century, as well as considering the nature of Egypt and Syria's international commerce with non-European regions. Firstly, of course, the *Tariffa di i pesi e misure* presents the commercial world as it appeared to Venetian eyes. A comparable Genoese, Ragusan or Catalan manual would have given different weightings to certain commodities and ports of call. A Genoese manual, for instance, would have placed greater stress on high bulk, relatively low cost commodities such as wood and grain and devoted more attention to Chios at the expense of Cyprus and Corfu. In essentials however, commercial manuals and commercially minded travellers' reports confirm Di Pasi's testimony. The Florentine manual of Antonio da Uzzano, *La Practica della Mercatura* (1442), for instance, makes no reference to Egypt as a purveyor of carpets.

The Italian merchant Piloti, who was resident in Egypt for much of the period 1396-1438 provides corroboration for key parts of Di Pasi's testimony. Turkey was the carpet producing region. Carpets ('tappedi') were sent from Balat (the ancient Miletus) on the south Turkish coast to Chios and there were transhipped to larger Genoese vessels and taken to the West. Anatolian carpets were also despatched via the ports of Sattalia

(Adalia) and Candelore (Alaya) to Alexandria. Like Uzzano, Piloti makes no reference to Egypt producing its own carpets.[5]

Cairo was chiefly noted as a place to buy precious stones. At the end – or rather somewhat beyond the period in question – Carlier de Pinon produced an account of his travels in the East in 1579 which are full of interesting commercial details. Istanbul sold hides and carpets 'lesquelz toutesfoix sont faicts pour la plus part en Natolie',[6] as well as wool and certain fish products such as caviare. He noted the importance of Jews as intermediaries in the trade with the West and gave a detailed description of the technique for producing goats' hair camlets. He travelled from Turkey to Alexandria on a Turkish pilgrim ship. Apart from pilgrims the chief cargo was wood. On arrival in Egypt the sailors, who were partners in the enterprise, expected to make profitable purchases of such staples as rice and peas and such luxuries as precious stones, cloth, incense and porcelain vases from the Indies. Spices were the most important commodities for sale in Cairo, followed by white cotton cloth which was used for turbans. Also one might buy there striped cloths, scimitars, apes, parakeets, theriac or ostrich eggs. Carlier de Pinon noted the extensive employment of slaves as artisans, but neither in Cairo or later in Damascus does he mention the production or sale of carpets.

Only when he came to describe the port of Tripoli and after mentioning the local commodities – cotton, nut-gall and pistachios – did he mention the sale of carpets and other luxury goods from the East. '. . . le rest vient des pays d'Asie la grande, et des Indes comme est le musc, les espiceries, les soyes cruyes, les noix d'Indes et autres. Il s'y vend aussi des tapis, et des toiles ouvraigées'.[7] The context implies that the carpets came from further east, presumably from Persia. That rugs were on sale in Tripoli in the period is confirmed by an Ottoman fiscal decree of 1571 where rugs ('khālīja') are to be taxed at eleven 'aspers' the bale.[8]

Di Pasi's information about North Africa and its carpet production is corroborated by other Western sources. In the 15th and 16th centuries Portuguese, English and others bought carpets or rugs in Merinid, then Wattasid, Fez and in Hafsid Tunis and Tripoli. Though there are abundant references to 'tapetes' being made and sold in North Africa, not all these 'carpets' were high grade woollen pile rugs. Much of what was produced was certainly cheap striped mats – referred to as 'hanbels' by Europeans – which were purchased by Europeans and Arabs with a view to resale in sub-Saharan Africa.[9] Piloti may have been referring to hanbals when he wrote of 'carpectes' being imported by Alexandria and from North Africa and being sold to the Bedouin of the Delta region 'pour leur vestir'. Elsewhere Piloti noted that every year between eight and ten ships arrived in Alexandria from Tunis and points further west, bringing among other things, white woollen wraps which the bedouin used as their sole dress. However, it does not seem that the Arabic term 'hanbal' was used only to designate cheap mats and wraps.[10]

Cheap mats would have been an inappropriate gift to offer a Mamluk Sultan, yet 'hanbals' were among the gifts sent by the Merinid Sultan Abū-l-Ḥasan Alī I to the Mamluk Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn in 738/1337. There are two variant lists of the gifts sent by Abū-l-Ḥasan Alī. According to Ibn Marzūq, among the gifts were three carpets ('ṭinfusa'), two silk hanbals, ten hanbals of wool and silk, plus hanbals

from the Ouarsennis and Azemmur regions of western Algeria.[11] It seems possible then that many of the rugs designated as 'Mamluks' were produced in North Africa (and it is even possible that when Barbaro wrote in 1474 of the most beautiful carpets, 'quelli del Cairo e di Borsa', he was confusing Cairo with Qairouan in Tunisia).

Egypt's commerce with North Africa was mainly sea-borne. Use of the land route was rare, because of the danger of Bedouin banditry. A large 'ḥājj' caravan could offer merchants protection, and the arrival of such caravans in Egypt were signalled as major commercial events. However such great land caravans arrived occasionally rather than annually. Egypt's sea-borne traffic with its North African neighbours was, as has been already noted, largely in the hands of the Venetians. Muslim merchants such as the 15th century scholar and entrepreneur ᶜAbd al-Bāsit were happy to make use of such shipping for their commercial enterprises. In the 15th and early 16th centuries, at least in the years when Venice and Mamluk Egypt were on good terms with one another, it was the custom for two or three Venetian galleys to arrive annually from North Africa and discharge their cargoes at Alexandria, then return to North Africa before finally returning to Alexandria where these galleys would rejoin the rest of the homeward bound Venetian convoy (about five galleys came directly to Alexandria from Venice each year).[12] Although Venice dominated the traffic between Egypt and North Africa it did not monopolise it. Genoese galleys, for instance, carried Tunisian salt and grain to Egypt.

What the *Tariffa de i pesi e misure* does not and cannot tell us much about is Egypt's and Syria's commerce with non-European regions. Modern economic historians have tended to describe the commerce of the Mamluk and Ottoman Sultanates in excessively Eurocentric terms. But André Raymond, considering Ottoman commerce in the 18th century, has offered the impressionistic calculation that trade with Europe accounted for some 15% of the value of its long distance commerce, while trade with the Indies accounted for 36% and trade within its own frontiers for 50%.[13] There are no strong grounds for believing that trade with Europe bulked larger in earlier centuries.

The 'ḥājj' played a major role in the economic life of Egypt and Syria. Damascus' prosperity depended less on visits by Venetian merchants than it did on the safe departure and return of the pilgrim caravan. Ibn Ṭūlūn, the Damascan chronicler, observed that when in 1510-11 the 'ḥājj' from Damascus revived after a four year interval, the crafts revived too and the citizens rejoiced. Merchants took advantage of the pilgrim caravans to secure partial exemptions from trade tolls, and ordinary pilgrims took with them objects of barter with which to pay their way. Thus the convergence of pilgrims on Mecca and Medina took on the character of a trade fair. Varthema, who travelled with the 'hājj' caravan to Mecca, described how jewels and spices were brought there from India Major and Ethiopia, as well as cotton and silk from Bengal. Wax was another commodity much in demand.[14]

As far as Egypt and Syria were concerned, India's chief economic importance lay in its role as a producer of cheap textiles. Cheap cotton fabrics were of little interest to the Westerners who went to Egypt to purchase spices, but it is noteworthy that when, in the first decade of the 16th century, the Portuguese began their attempted blockade of

the Red Sea commerce, Ibn Iyās made no mention of the disappearance of spices from Egyptian markets. What he did notice was that material for turbans and muslin cloth were failing to get through because of Portuguese actions.[15] (The expansion of Europe's own production of cheap textiles was probably the chief result of the only partially successful Portuguese blockade.) There is no reason to believe that the Gulf was any less important than the Red Sea as a route for Indian goods. From the Gulf, goods were carried up the Euphrates and across the desert to Aleppo or alternatively to Tabriz. Most of the shipping in the Indian Ocean seems to have been managed by Arabs or Persians and there were communities of merchants from Alexandria and Damascus established in the chief towns on the west coast of India. There is (I think) no evidence of any trade in carpets between Egypt and India in this period, and when India did begin to produce superior knotted pile carpets in the late 16th century in the reign of the Mughal ruler Akbar, these carpets show no sign of having been influenced by the 'Mamluk' type of carpet.

In commerce with Turkey and the Black Sea region, Egypt was primarily concerned with securing wood, iron, furs and, above all, white slaves. Despite Mamluk-Ottoman wars in the 1460s and 1480s and despite the final confrontation in 1516-1517, political and commercial relations between the two powers were in most years very good, the Ottoman sultans going so far as to provide strategic materials for use against the Portuguese and refuse all payment. Only in the very last years of the Mamluk Sultanate did Qansūḥ al-Ġhawrī protest that the Ottomans were obstructing the flow of white slaves to Egypt, while Selim responded by claiming that Turkish merchants were put off from going to Egypt by the Mamluk Sultan's manipulation of the currency rates.

It is important to remember than in the 15th century large parts of Turkey in Asia were not under Ottoman rule, but either formed part of the Mamluk Sultanate, or were ruled over by beys, some of whom were allied with, or tributary to, the Mamluk sultans. Cilicia with its important south coast ports – Alaya, Silifke, Korykos and Ayas – was a province of the Mamluk Sultanate until 1516, and was governed on the Mamluk behalf by the Ramadān beys. To the north of Cilicia-Ramadān, the Qaramān beys ruled over an extensive principality which included the towns of Konya and Aqsaray. The principality was conquered by the Ottomans c. 1468, but even in the 16th century the region was not securely in Ottoman control. Aqsaray was famous as a centre for the production of high quality knotted wool carpets. According to the 14th century traveller, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Egypt was one of the regions to which those carpets were exported, and his testimony is confirmed by fragments of 13th and 14th century Anatolian rugs which apparently have been retrieved from the rubbish heaps of Fustat.[16]

Further to the east the Malatya-Albistan region, which was notable for its wood production, was an area of contention. The Ḏhū'l-Qādir princes claimed to rule the territory, but they were often forced to share their authority with Mamluk governors who installed themselves in the towns. Still further to the north and east the region of Erzerum was noted as a centre for the production of carpets. In the period 1450-1550 it was governed successively by the Qaraqoyonlu, the Aqqoyonlu, the Safavids and the Ottomans. All the regions discussed above were by 1516 at least formally under Ottoman

control.

Much of Egypt's trade with Anatolia was by sea – though until the Ottoman conquest of Rhodes in 1522 that route was extremely hazardous. Just as, according to Piloti, carpets and other commodities were brought out of small Anatolian ports and trans-shipped at Chios before being sent on in bigger galleys to the West, so it is likely that some Anatolian exports were trans-shipped at Cyprus before being taken on to Beirut and Alexandria. Although some of this trade was in Italian hands, still there were significant communities of expatriate Turkish merchants and sailors resident in Egypt even before the Ottoman conquest. (There were similar groups of Maghribis resident in Cairo and Alexandria. The Maghribis provided the sort of riff-raff who could be pressed into service as sailors, or low status arquebusiers, but the Maghribi community also included some of the most prominent merchants in Egypt.)

It is probable that the volume of sea-borne trade between Turkey and Alexandria was dwarfed by that travelling by land from Aleppo to Bursa. Bertandon de la Brocquière who passed through Cilicia and the Qaraman lands on his way to Bursa in 1432 gives us an impression of the route such caravans took. (It is interesting to note that the traveller first saw Turkish carpets being made only after he had passed through Bursa and was in sight of the Gulf of Gallipoli!)[17]

Cotton, which was locally produced, was sent from Aleppo to Bursa. Even more importantly, Aleppo's commercial importance, which in this period had outstripped that of Damascus, was based on its position on the trade route from Persia to Turkey and the Mediterranean ports. Silk grown in the Gilan region passed through Aleppo on its way to find Genoese or Turkish buyers at Bursa. So did spices coming from further east. By the second half of the 15th century the Mamluk province of Aleppo had acquired a large population of Turkoman pastoralists and the region was predominantly Turcophone. Nevertheless Aleppo was not noted as a carpet producing region. A mid-to-late 13th century 'waqf' bequest for a mosque stipulated that the mats should come from Abbadan in Egypt and the carpets from Aqsaray.[18] Unfortunately very little is known about Syria's trade with Persia in this period. This is not because that commerce was unimportant, but because Aleppo in this period lacked a chronicler of the stature of Ibn Iyās or Ibn Ṭūlūn.

Despite the decline of certain local industries and despite difficulties with particular trading parties in particular years, the late 15th century and first decade of the 16th century was in general a period of commercial and industrial prosperity that had no precedent in the earlier Bahri Mamluk period. The causes of this prosperity were various. The scale of the commerce in silk, raw and finished, Persian and Syrian, had no precedent in the earlier centuries. Syrian cotton cultivation also increased vastly in the late Middle Ages. Jews fleeing from Spain and the Maghreb brought industrial and entrepreneurial skills to Egypt and Syria. In Egypt they secured control of the mint and were often employed in diplomatic contacts with the West. In Palestine there is ample evidence of their role in creating new textile factories and dye houses in Safed, Nablus and elsewhere. Jews also traded in textiles and spices. In the early 16th century the Venetians complained to the Sultan Qansūḥ al-Ġhawrī about the stiff competition they were facing

from Jewish traders in Damascus and Aleppo.[19]

To some extent the commercial boom in the East reflected the fortunes of the reviving post-Black Death economies of Europe and the increase in Western demand for luxuries. Commercial treaties were concluded with new customers such as Florence (1481, 1489, 1496, 1497) and Ragusa (1541). To a large extent the Mamluk Sultanate was merely a region of transit for luxury commodities coming from further east, but some dyes and spices were locally produced. In the early 16th century Qansūḥ al-Ghawrī revived the growth and profitable sale of balsam in Egypt for instance. Then again, high quality ceramic tiles only began to be purchased in Syria in the 15th century.

The closure of the Dār al-Ṭirāz (the state factory in Alexandria which produced high quality textiles with decorative gold bands) during the reign of Barsbay early in the 15th century has been taken by some economic historians as an indication of Egypt's penury and decay. However what happened was that 'ṭirāz' production was shifted to Cairo and privatised. The reasons for this move are not clear, but it may have been due to the Delta's vulnerability to pirate raiding. In any case, Mamluk chronicles make it abundantly clear that precious cloths continued to be distributed by the Sultan to his subjects until the end of the regime. Imported furs were also much in demand for distribution on such occasions.

Although surviving pile woven Mamluk carpets appear to date from the late 15th century at the earliest (and perhaps not all of them were made in Egypt) there can be little doubt that fine quality carpets were being produced in Egypt more than a century earlier. In 1341 the Cairo palace of the wealthy emir and sugar industrialist Sayf al-Dīn Qūsūn al-Nāṣirī was pillaged by the mob. Among the treasures stripped from the palace and vandalised were carpets (busuṭ) from Rum and Amid, also carpets 'min ᶜamal al-sharīf', according to Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*. Maqrīzī went on to add that there were 16 pairs of carpets 'min ᶜamal al-sharīf bi-Miṣr'. Literally this last may be translated as 'nobly made in Cairo (or in Egypt)'. Maqrīzī added that each pair of carpets was valued at 12,000 silver ('nuqra') dirhems. Ibn Taghrībirdī in his account of the same event reported that Qūsūn's palace contained carpets from Rum, Amid and Shiraz as well as 16 pairs of carpets *'min ᶜamal al-sharīf bi-Miṣr'* and four pairs of priceless silk carpets.[20] Although 'sharīf' can be translated literally as 'noble', in Mamluk Egypt the honorific epithet was specifically applied to enterprises and officials in the service of the Sultan – as for instance 'al-Inshā 'al-Sharīf', the Royal Chancery, or 'al-Khāṣṣ al-Sharīf', royal property or crown estate.[21] The Syrian prince Abū'l-Fidā described how in 1328 the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammed presented him and his son with golden jewelled belts and splendid cloth made by the Dār al-Ṭirāz in Alexandria for 'al-Khāṣṣ al-Sharīf'.[22] The inference to be drawn from all this is that in the 14th century luxury carpets were made in Egypt, either by the *Dār al-Ṭirāz*, or under some other form of patronage by the Sultan. The weaving may perhaps have been carried out by immigrant Persians – Qūsūn himself was noted for his patronage of sufis from Persia, while his contemporary, Aytamish al-Muḥammadī, is known to have brought a master mason from Tabriz to work in Cairo.

Presumably good quality carpets continued to be produced in Egypt in the 15th century, though probably not in any great numbers.

It is possible that Damascus was another centre of carpet production. According to the late 15th century manual on 'ḥisba' (market inspection) by Ibn ᶜAbd al-Hādī there were at least ten different kind of carpet weavers in Damascus.[23] However it is not clear whether he is writing about his own times or some earlier period. By the late 15th century the style and technique of the 'Cairene' carpet may have become internationalised to some extent, and it is evidently possible that 'Mamluk' carpets were by then being produced in Tunisia, Morocco and elsewhere.

The demand for 'Mamluk' carpets and the meeting of that demand in the late 15th century and early 16th century was probably assisted by two factors; first the difficulties experienced by the chief carpet weaving areas of Turkey and Persia due to warfare in those areas, and secondly the incorporation of Egypt and North Africa into the Ottoman Empire may have facilitated access to wider markets. Between 1462 and 1466 the Qaraqoyonlu were split between Jihān-shāh and his son Pīr Būdāq, causing a civil war which ended only with the latter's death. In 1468 the Qaraqoyonlu were defeated by the Aqqoyonlu and the latter occupied their territories. During the 1460s the Aqqoyonlu were also at war with the Qaramāns and in 1464 the Aqqoyonlu captured and presumably sacked Aqsaray. Between 1463 and 1479 Venice was at war with the Ottomans. In 1467 the Dhu'l-Qadirid Shāh Suwār rebelled against the Mamluk Sultan. His revolt was only put down in 1472 after much hard campaigning by Qā'itbay's generals in southern and eastern Turkey.

During the 1470s the Aqqoyonlu ruler Uzun Hasan menaced both the eastern possessions of the Ottomans and the northern possessions of the Mamluks. After his death in 1478 his empire fell turbulently apart. In 1475 the Ottomans formally incorporated the old Qaramān beylicate into their empire. In 1485 they also attempted to annexe Cilicia. Despite initial Ottoman successes, the Mamluks were in the long run able to take the offensive and invade the old Qaramān lands. The war between the Ottomans and the Mamluks was only concluded in 1491. From 1499 until 1503 Venice and the Ottomans were once more at war. A major revolt against Ottoman rule by Turkomans and schismatics began in the Qaramān region in 1500. Two years later Ismāᶜīl raised the standard of Shīᶜī revolt against the Aqqoyonlu in Persia. Thereafter the rise of Safavid power threatened both the Ottoman lands and the Mamluk dependency of Dhū'l-Qādir. In 1511 Shāh Kūlī led a major revolt of the Qizilbāsh in Anatolia against Ottoman rule. In 1514 the Ottoman Sultan Selim defeated Shah Ismāᶜīl at Chaldiran and briefly occupied Tabriz. Although Mamluk Egypt in the same period faced many problems, Cairo must have appeared as a relatively safe haven by comparison with the commercial centres of the Turco-Iranian plateau.

However Aleppo was inevitably adversely affected by the war between the Ottomans and the Safavids. In 1514 Selim proclaimed a blockade against Iranian goods. The blockade seems to have been effective and a Venetian document of the same year confirmed that Persian silk was not getting through. In 1515 Selim extended the ban to include Mamluk shipping carrying Iranian goods.[24] In 1516 (in part doubtless because of the damage being done to Aleppo's commerce by Selim's measures) the Mamluks and the Ottomans drifted into war with one another once more. This time the Ottomans were

victorious and Syria and Egypt were annexed to the Ottoman Empire (1516-1517). Iranian merchants resident in Aleppo were deported to Istanbul. Merchants, craftsmen and leaders of immigrant communities in Cairo and Damascus were similarly deported to Istanbul – where they joined earlier deportees from Tabriz. The Turco-Syrian blockade against Persian goods was maintained until the death of Selim in 1520. Although the silk commerce then revived, it must have been disrupted once more as Ottoman-Safavid hostilities intensified in the 1530s.

Despite Selim's forced drafts of skilled labour and prominent merchants from the Mamluk cities there is little evidence of any serious damage done to the Egyptian and Syrian economies by the Ottoman conquest. On the contrary – with the obvious exception of Aleppo's overland commerce with the East – Egypt and Syria seem to have benefited from their incorporation into the Ottoman Empire, that is their incorporation into a wider Muslim trading area. The Ottoman deployment of a fleet in the eastern Mediterranean and the conquest of Rhodes in 1522 greatly reduced piracy. Ottoman use of block forts garrisoned by janissaries along the chief land routes made commerce more secure. Ottoman fiscality encouraged cash crop farming.

Carpet weavers are not mentioned as being among those despatched to Istanbul in 1517. Clearly carpets were being woven in Cairo in the late 16th century, for in 1551 carpets from Egypt were ordered for the Sulemaniyye mosque in Istanbul and in 1585 11 Egyptian carpet weavers were summoned to Istanbul.[25] There is no direct evidence for a guild of carpet weavers in Mamluk Egypt, but the craft guilds of Ottoman Egypt claimed to trace their history back to Mamluk times and beyond. A manuscript of the late 16th century or early 17th century referred to a guild of carpet weavers and named the patron who was held in legend to have established their guild as being ᶜAmīr Ibn ᶜAbdallāh. Evliyya Celebi, who visited Egypt in the 1670s, found some 300 individuals distributed among 20 workshops involved in carpet production.[26] The production and marketing of carpets in the late medieval and early modern period involved very few people and was a marginal economic activity.

Inevitably then a documentary survey of the commerce in carpets demands reliance of such suggestive scraps as those offered above. It is not yet possible to offer any sustained and coherent documentation of the 'Mamluk' carpet trade in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Footnotes

1. Di Pasi, *Tariffa*, (1540 ed.) f. 141b
2. *Ibid*, f. 56a
3. *Ibid*, f. 142a
4. *Ibid*, f. 142b
5. P.H. Dopp, ed., *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti sur le passage en Terre Sainte (1420)*, Louvain, 1950, pp. 137-8, 156
6. E. Blochet, ed., *Relation du Voyage en Orient de Carlier de Pinon (1579)*, Paris, p. 93
7. *Ibid*, p. 291
8. R. Mantran and J. Sauvaget, *Reglements Fiscaux Ottomans: les Provinces Syriennes*, Paris, 1951, pp. 64-5
9. R. Ricard, 'Le commerce de Berberie et l'empire Portugais aux XVe et XVIe siècles', *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales*, II (1936), pp. 269, 284; J. Caille, 'Le

commerce Anglais avec le Maroc pendant la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle', *Revue Africaine*, LXXXIV (1940), pp. 200, 217

10. *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, pp. 59, 134-5

11. M. Canard, 'Les relations entre les Merinides et les Mamelouks au XIVe siècle', *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales*, V (1939-41), pp. 57, 60

12. J. Reinaud, 'Traités du commerce entre la republique de Venise et les derniers sultans mamloucs d'Egypte', *Journal Asiatique*, IV (1829), pp. 26, 29

13. A. Raymond, 'The Ottoman Conquest and the Development of the Great Arab Towns', *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, I (1979-80), p. 90

14. R.C. Temple, ed., *The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502-8*, London, 1928, p. 18; cf. J. Jomier, *Le Mahmal et la caravane des pelerins de la Mecque, XIII-XXe siècles*, Cairo, 1953, pp. 209-24 (Appendice, 'La caravane du Mahmal et le commerce international de la Mecque')

15. Ibn Iyās, *Journal d'un Bourgeois du Caire*, (trans. G. Wiet), I, Paris, 1955, p. 106

16. *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, (trans. H.A.R. Gibb), Cambridge, 1971, II, p. 286; C.J. Lamm, 'The Marby Rug and some Fragments of Carpets Found in Egypt', *Svenska Orient-sallskapet Arsbok* (1937), pp. 51-130

17. Bertrandon de la Brocquière, in *Early Travels in Palestine*, (ed. and trans. T. Wright), London, 1848, p. 333

18. Ṣibt ibn al-ᶜAjamī, *Les Tresors d'Or*, (ed. and trans. J. Sauvaget), Beirut, 1951, p. 78

19. E. Ashtor, 'New Data for the History of Levantine Jewries in the Fifteenth Century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Jewish Studies*, III (1975), pp. 67-102; A. Cohen and B. Lewis, *Population and Revenue in the Towns of Palestine in the Sixteenth Century*, Princeton, 1978, pp. 28-30, 59-62; B. Lewis, *Notes and Documents from the Turkish Archives: A Contribution to the History of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, Jerusalem, 1952; J. Reinaud, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 48-9

20. Maqrizi, *al-Khitat*, Cairo, Bulaq edition, 1853, II, pp. 73, 74; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhira*, Cairo, 1929-56, X, pp. 44-5

21. On the appropriate use of the term *sharīf* see Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al-Aᶜshā* Cairo, 1919-22, VI, p. 187. *ᶜAmal al-sharīf* in the texts of Maqrizi and Ibn Taghrībirdī is here understood as a contraction of *ᶜāmal al-khāṣṣ al-sharīf* or *ᶜāmal al-ṭiraz al-sharif*, with the qualifying adjective standing in for the noun. For *al-ṭirāz al-sharīf*, see Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, I, p. 469

22. Abu al-Fidā, *ᶜal-Mukhtaṣar*, Istanbul, n.d., IV, p. 98; cf. R.B. Serjeant, *Islamic Textiles*, Beirut, 1972, p. 40

23. H. Zayāt (ed.), 'Kitāb al-Ḥisba', *al-Mashriq*, XXXV (1937), p. 386; the early 14th century encyclopaedist, al-Nuwayrī, refers to what may be a tax on carpet production in Syria in his *Nihāyat al-Arab*, Cairo, 1923, VIII, p. 261

24. J.L. Bacqué-Gramont, 'Notes sur le blocus de commerce Iranien par Selim Ier', *Turcica*, VI (1975), pp. 68-88

25. J.M. Rogers, 'The State and the Arts in Ottoman Turkey, Part 2', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, XIV (1982), p. 306

26. A. Raymond, *'Artisans et commercants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle'*, Damascus, 1973-4, I, pp. 341-2, II, p. 353

V

FACTIONS IN MEDIEVAL EGYPT*

"If all you have to tell us is that one barbarian succeeded another barbarian on the banks of the Oxus or Jaxartes, what benefit have you conferred on the public?" Voltaire's question is an awkward one for anyone investigating the transmission and distribution of power in the XVth century Circassian Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria. Even so the question of factionalism and its role in succession crises and other crises in the history of the Islamic lands has to be tackled, for surely the prevalence of factions in the Near East and our lack of understanding of them does add a certain patina of dullness to much of Islamic history. Faction succeeds to faction as "Amurath to Amurath", and though Macaulay could find the history of England and its latter part, the struggle of Whig and Tory, to be "emphatically the history of progress", few people have felt similarly confident about the struggle of Ẓāhirī and Manṣūrī factions in medieval Egypt. It is hard to understand past events without imposing a pattern, and at the political level the gyrations of Egyptian factions do not lend themselves easily to the imposition of pattern.

Nevertheless, some of the most interesting work on medieval Islamic history produced in recent decades has addressed itself directly or indirectly to the nature of factions and the way they have operated – Lapidus, Shaban, Bulliet, Mottahedeh. There is a heartening lack of unanimity in their findings. We may have in modern studies an "Islamic City", an "Islamic Sexuality", but not yet an "Islamic Faction". What is a faction? It is well described in E. W. Ives's study of the phenomenon in Tudor history. It is "a group of people which seeks objectives that are seen primarily in personal terms, either positive (gaining or keeping privileges, grants, jobs, office for members or their associates), or negative (denying such things to rivals)."[1] There are two ways of looking at medieval Islamic factions. First, one can take the factions at face value and simply study how they operated (and they usually operated to the detriment of their subjects); alternatively it can be argued that these factions are only apparent factions, that they are really parties with ideologies, and that though the nature of the source material in Arabic is such that those programmes are not handed to the modern reader on a plate, nevertheless programmes can be inferred.

To take the second position first – M. A. Shaban argued that the apparently petty tribal conflict between North and South Arabs, Qays and Yaman, in the early VIIIth century, was not really in the end a tribal conflict, but rather a struggle between a party favouring expansionism and one favouring consolidation and the assimilation of the non-Arab.[2] Similarly Richard Bulliet in his melancholy study of the auto-destruction of a medieval city through factional violence, *The Patricians of Nishapur*, found a hidden subtext to the struggle

between Shāfiʿī and Ḥanafī patricians. The factions had ideals, however elusive – the Ḥanafīs tended to the aristocratic and conservative; the Shāfiʿīs to fraternal solidarity and mysticism.[3]

On the other hand, Lapidus and Mottahedeh have taken apparent factions to be actual factions. Not only are they without programmes that go beyond self-interest and enrichment, it even seems that their self-interest tends towards the negative and self-protective, rather than being actively ambitious. Lapidus in *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* concentrated on urban factions, composed for the most part of riff-raff and manipulated by the Mamluk élite in the interest of Mamluk control. Lapidus stressed the close links between the solidarity groups of urban quarters and rural tribalism. Indeed the former at times seems to be only an extension of the latter.[4]

Mottahedeh in *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* took his material from Iran and Iraq under the Buyids in the Xth and XIth centuries. He has much of interest to say about the role of clientship and oath bonds in forming factional groups. Factions tended towards a negative role. It was not just the lack of a programme, but that they cannot be seen as social building blocks. The faction of a quarter for instance exists only to protect that quarter, not to advance the quarter's aims further or to offer its members mutual self help. Factions did little or nothing to resolve pervasive social atomism.[5]

So now what about Mamluk factions? I thought it might be interesting to look at the life cycle of a Mamluk faction – its formation, growth, maturity and collapse. Not simply because I thought it might be interesting to compare the *modus operandi* of a Mamluk emir with a Qaysī tribal shaykh or a Ḥanafī patrician, but possibly because another reason why Mamluk history, the history of Egypt and Syria between 1250 and 1517, appears so peculiarly intractable is that it tends to be studied and narrated as if Sultans took the decisions and ran their empire as arbitrary despots. This is perhaps a little unreal. Surely decisions are made at the level of the inner oligarchy, perhaps in a *majlis*. Usually the decision taken depends not on the strength or weakness of an individual sultan, but on the strength or weakness of a faction.

I thought that I would look at the Muʾayyadī faction, fl. c. 1400–1467. Muʾayyadī mamluks of the Sultan al-Muʾayyad Shaykh are fairly easily spotted by their *nisba*, unlike Ẓāhirīs who might be mamluks of Barqūq, Ṭaṭār, Jaqmaq or Khushqadam. (Al-Muʾayyad Aḥmad who reigned for four months in 865/1461 had no time to acquire or emancipate an identifiable corps of mamluks). The period is rich in source material, including al-Maqrīzī's and Ibn Ḥajar's chronicles and al-Sakhāwī's twelve volume biographical dictionary.[6] We also have Piloti's memorandum on medieval Egypt and Piloti was by far and away the best informed and most interesting of contemporary western observers of Mamluk society.[7] Above all the life cycle of the Muʾayyadī faction falls mainly within the lifetime of Ibn Taghrībirdī (1411–70).[8]

At first glance Ibn Taghrībirdī's chronicle of Egypt, *al-Nujūm al-Ẓāhira*,[9] is not so very different from other long winded annalistic efforts by al-Maqrīzī, al-Sakhāwī or Ibn Iyās. But at first sight only. Though Ibn Taghrībirdī's chronicle is couched in the form of annals, with obituaries of the distinguished at irregular intervals, in fact the *Nujūm* was conceived as a mirror for princes. Specifically, it was started for a son of the Sultan Jaqmaq, though that Prince did not live to benefit from the book.[10] Events in the *Nujūm* have morals; the morals that Ibn Taghrībirdī draws are at times Machiavellian, at times more reminiscent of Polonius. Ibn Taghrībirdī shared the widespread Turkish mamluk fascination with popular Arab proverbs, and his history contrives to illustrate the essential truths of such maxims as "Either a jade or an arrow to wealth": "If you wish to see the world after your death look at it after the death of some other": "Arms present, wisdom absent": the tone is down-beat, worldly wise and fatalistic. If one were to judge from the frequency of the citations, then al-Mutanabbī (915–965) was Ibn Taghrībirdī's favourite poet. Probably the ease with which aphorisms and proverbs could be extracted from al-Mutanabbī's poetry was as important here as the fact that al-Mutanabbī's forte had been in political and military panegyric.

The *Nujūm* addresses itself very directly, and in a way in which no other Mamluk chronicle does, to problems of strife and intrigue. Ibn Taghrībirdī was not a distant uncomprehending observer of Cairo's street warfare and politicking. He was the son of a senior mamluk emir, and had many friends and relatives among the politico-military class. One of those friends and informants was the Emir, later Sultan, Khushqadam al-Mu'ayyadī.[11] Beyond that he was at least on the fringes of the strife itself, watching the expression on the Amīr Ināl's face while he organized his successful bid to become Sultan in 1453.[12] He was also political adviser to Jānibak al-Ẓāhirī, one of the intriguing contestants of the factional manoeuvres of the 1460s.[13] Ibn Taghrībirdī's meditation on the nature of power, how it is held, attained and lost will bear comparison with those of his near contemporaries, Machiavelli and Commynes.[14]

The history of Mu'ayyad Shaykh's faction can be summarized as follows. In the first stage, the Mamluk Emir Shaykh al-Maḥmūdī recruited a following.[15] This took place during the troubled reign of the Sultan al-Nāṣir Faraj (801/1399-815/1412).[16] For much of Faraj's reign, Shaykh was in revolt against the Sultan; more rarely he co-operated with the Sultan against other rebel emirs. Most of his followers were recruited in Syria while Shaykh was governor first of Tripoli, then of Safed, and finally of Damascus.

His following can be broken down into four categories. Firstly newly imported mamluks whom he purchased and who became known as Shaykhī mamluks (later, when he became sultan, as Mu'ayyadī mamluks).[17] As examples one might cite Alṭunbughā al-Marqabī, who governed the sub-province of Marqab in Shaykh's province of Tripoli, or Āqbāy whom the Emir acquired with the winnings from a card game and who became the Emir's household treasurer.

Secondly leaderless or restless mamluks, the equivalent of the *ronin* in pre-modern Japan, people who were attracted to the Emir Shaykh's service by his reputation or his money. There are many examples of these, Ṭūghān, a Turkoman muleteer in the Safed region who eventually found work as the Emir's master of the stables,[18] or Jaqmaq al-Arghūnshāwī, a mamluk who had been owned by five masters, before being manumitted by the sixth, Arghūnshāh. This mamluk joined Shaykh after the death of his master in 802/1399–1400 and found work as head of the Emir's guard corps.[19] Syria seems to have been full of masterless mamluks, soldiers of fortune. If they did not attach themselves to Shaykh then they found some other wealthy or promising looking emir to attach themselves to.

Thirdly there were emirs who came to Shaykh as near equals and who were attracted to him by the fact that he was their *khushdāsh* (their former barrack room companion in servitude, the old school tie network as it were) or by the likelihood that he would be the next sultan. The Emir Ṭaṭār al-Ẓāhirī (like Shaykh, a former mamluk of al-Ẓāhir Barqūq) is an example.[20] Though emirs and mamluks in these two latter categories strictly speaking had no claim to the *nisba* "al-Mu'ayyadī", nevertheless a few of them became so closely identified with the Mu'ayyadī cause that contemporaries did sometimes give them that *nisba*. Fourthly, one should not forget Arab civilian administrators and financiers whose abilities attracted Shaykh and who were taken into service by him. Ibn Muzhir of the Damascus chancery[21] and Ibn Kuwayz of the Syrian army bureau are examples.[22] They worked for the governor in Damascus and he would remember them when he became Sultan. Shaykh's clientèle was vast; eventually the coalition became so large that he hardly had any choice as to whether he was going to become Sultan or not. He had to succeed to satisfy the career aspirations of his clientèle. Sultans were created as much by the ambitions of their followers as by their own ambitions.

In the second stage, from 815/1412 on, Shaykh has become Sultan, Sultan al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh. His vast Syrian clientèle had been rivalled only by that of his erstwhile ally in Syria, the Emir Nawrūz. Nawrūz recruited many mamluks in Syria, but not as many mamluks as Shaykh.[23] During the interregnum or pseudo-reign of the Caliph al-'Ādil Musta'īn, for a few months in 1412, actually a period of power sharing, Nawrūz chose to govern Syria, estimating that the big sources of manpower were still there.[24] It was a mistaken gamble, for which he paid with his life. From 1412 on al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh ruled independently, or rather he ruled as the representative of his *khushdāsh* (his barrack room companions from the days of Barqūq) and of other near equals in wealth, reputation and age. He bought many mamluks, the Mu'ayyadīs, but it took time to train these mamluks, many of whom were not even adolescent at the time of purchase. Essentially Shaykh ruled as the representative of his generation peers, not of his purchased following.

The Mamluk equivalent of a cabinet in Egypt was the council of senior emirs,

which advised and indeed often directed the Sultan. In the XVth century, all Emirs of One Hundred (mamluks) and Commanders of One Thousand in Egypt, seem to have had the right and duty to attend the *mashūra al-'umarā'*.[25] In this Mamluk cabinet, there were seven senior ranking offices (one might misleadingly call them ministries with portfolio). In rough order of seniority (for there were minor changes in ranking from reign to reign), they were those of *Atābak al-'Asākir* (Commander in Chief of the Armies), the *Amīr Silāḥ* (Emir of Arms), *Amīr Majlis* (Emir or President of the Council), *Amīr Ākhūr* (Emir of the Stables), *Amīr Ra's Nawba al-Nuwwāb* (Emir of the Guards Officers), *Amīr Dawādār* (Executive Secretary), and the *Ḥājib al-Ḥujjāb* (Senior Chamberlain). And if one is identifying the highest appointments in the Sultanate, then one should also consider the seven rated governorships in Syria, those of Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, Hama, Safed, Gaza and Karak (though probably only the first three were clearly of the first importance and an emir who had attained the governorship of Gaza was more likely to have been an emir of moderate distinction at the end of his career than a high flier contesting for the top).

Towards the very end of Shaykh's reign, at the beginning of 824/ late 1420, only two of these fourteen posts were held by emirs who had been acquired and trained as mamluks by Shaykh and manumitted by him.[26] Alṭunbughā al-Marqabī was the *Amīr Dawādār* and a Yashbak al-Yūsufī was Governor of Aleppo. Not only that, but few Mu'ayyadīs held even junior posts around the palace. Many of his purchased mamluks were unemancipated at the time of the Sultan's death and they presumably will have been purchased by his successors and reclassified as their mamluks. Most of those who had been emancipated were simple royal mamluks with no special rank or privileges. Shaykh had a reputation as a man who trained his mamluks thoroughly and promoted them slowly. It seems to have been justified.[27]

Shaykh was succeeded in 824/1421 by his infant son, the one year old al-Muẓaffar Aḥmad.[28] By this stage of the history of the Mamluk Sultanate, it was the unspoken convention and universally understood that the accession of an infant to the throne, nominally presiding under the guidance of a regent or regents designated by the dying Sultan, in practice only inaugurated a caretaker regime. That is that it inaugurated a period in which the power brokers and their henchmen manoeuvred to determine who should be the next Sultan. The infant in this case was in the care of a triumvirate of regents.[29] None of the regents was a Mu'ayyadī. They were all Ẓāhirīs. In a sense care of the child had been left to the Sultan's brothers, rather than to his sons. These emirs and other ambitious men now manoeuvred to determine who should really be the next Sultan. Though by the end of his reign al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh had purchased 5000 mamluks,[30] such a body of young foreigners was too inexperienced to be politically effective and too large to be politically united.

A word about the *khāṣṣakiyya* is now necessary. *Khāṣṣakī*, or élite mamluks,

were mamluks who had finished basic training, i.e. they had been emancipated, and who were now receiving further instruction (and making useful political contacts) by serving in the Citadel as pages, ceremonial guards, junior military secretaries and so forth.[31] They had been picked out from the vast mass of emancipated mamluk troopers and selected for future accelerated promotion. Indeed one's chance of even getting an emirate unless one had first been a *khāṣṣakī* was rather slight. It had been one of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's reforms to reduce this palace establishment. Allegedly he reduced the *khāṣṣakiyya* from 1000 to 80.[32] Now suddenly in 1421, during the eight month reign of al-Muẓaffar Aḥman, the *khāṣṣakī* corps was expanded vastly. In at least half the instances in which it is stated when a Mu'ayyadī became a *khāṣṣakī*, it is in this period. A representative case is Khushqadam, already emancipated and a royal mamluk. He now became a *khāṣṣakī* and a cup bearer. I here note however that Jānibak Shaykh al-Mu'ayyadī remained a simple mamluk without rank or *iqṭā'*. It would be unreal to attribute the promotion of Mu'ayyadīs to *khāṣṣakī* rank to the little infant. It is rather that inexperienced but muscular young mamluks are being bought off by older emirs in the regency council with a modicum of promotion.[33]

In fact when Shaykh died, the Mu'ayyadī mamluks in Egypt split into two groups.[34] Interestingly one of the groups was a Mongol faction under Qujqār. (It was not the first, but it was the last, time that mamluks of Mongol origin attempted to act as a cohesive body). The divisions among the Mu'ayyadīs and still more their youth and inexperience opened the way for the Ẓāhirī *khushdāsh* of Shaykh, the Emir Ṭaṭār. During his brief regency over Shaykh's infant successor, and his still briefer rule as Sultan in his own right, Ṭaṭār carried out a vigorous purge of the leaders of the old Mu'ayyadī faction, though his chief victims were mostly Ẓāhirī *khushdāsh* and other senior emirs.[35] The most dangerous of the Mu'ayyadīs who had reached a high rank, 'Alī Bāy al-Dawādār, was executed, but Alṭunbughā was only imprisoned. Some Mu'ayyadīs were actually placated by being given minor promotions, to deputy Emir of the Stables and so forth. Many Mu'ayyadīs were ordered to leave Cairo for Syria (which meant years of oblivion and tedious garrison duty), but those already in the *khāṣṣakiyya* were left there.

The Sultan al-Ẓāhir Ṭaṭār's purge inaugurated the third stage in the history of the Mu'ayyadī group. Though Ṭaṭār was to die, after a two month reign, from a chill contracted by paranoically wearing chainmail day and night, the fortunes of the Mu'ayyadī group were hardly advanced during the pseudo-reign of Ṭaṭār's infant son in 1421 or in the reign of the ultimate successor, al-Ashraf Barsbāy (1422–37).[36] Barsbāy, like Shaykh, favoured his generation peers from the days of Barqūq, and bought his own Ashrafī mamluks as fast as he could. It was neither possible nor desirable that he slaughter 5000 Mu'ayyadīs; the Ashrafīs were too inexperienced and the Ẓāhirīs too old to occupy the sorts of posts that the Mu'ayyadīs held. Still, it was advisable that they keep their heads down low.

They spent Barsbāy's reign, many of them in Syria, kicking their heels in remote garrison posts. None of the Mu'ayyadīs was admitted to high office in Egypt. Three of them exceptionally and, in two cases, briefly, held lesser governorships in Syria. A few advanced to become emirs of ten or *khāṣṣakīs*. Most were lowly troopers, mamluks without *iqṭā'* subsisting on monthly pay and rations. Khushqadam remained a *khāṣṣakī* and Jānibak Shaykh a simple mamluk.

Barsbāy, like Mu'ayyad Shaykh and al-Ẓāhir Ṭaṭār, hoped to be succeeded by his son. Like them he was disappointed. Yet another Ẓāhirī emir (that is a former mamluk of Barqūq's), Jaqmaq, launched a coup. To counteract the armed strength of Barsbāy's own purchased mamluks he relied on older generations of mamluks. Above all he relied on what was by now one of the most experienced and toughest blocs, the Mu'ayyadīs. It was Mu'ayyadī emirs, mostly of subaltern rank, who surrounded the citadel and stopped assistance reaching the Ashrafīs within it.[37] Jaqmaq did not forget the debt, and his reign (842/1438–857/1453)[38] saw a dramatic improvement in the fortunes of the Mu'ayyadī faction. Senior Mu'ayyadīs were released from prison in Alexandria, lesser Mu'ayyadī troopers were summoned from what was effectively exile in Syria and reinstalled in the Citadel, and during the course of Jaqmaq's reign, Mu'ayyadīs advancing inch by inch came to occupy commanding positions in the governments of Egypt and Syria. Inch by inch, I stress, for though scores of Mu'ayyadīs were promoted in Jaqmaq's reign, it was done in measured stages, as tradition and protocol required. 'Alī Bāy al-'Ajamī went from *khāṣṣakī* to his first emirate, becoming an emir of ten; so did Khushqadam, and most of the promotions are of this order, to the rank of emir of ten.[39] I here note that Jānibak Shaykh remained without *iqṭā'* or rank.[40] A few however of the older or more able Mu'ayyadī emirs advanced a long way in the course of Jaqmaq's reign. Though in 1441 only one of fourteen top jobs was held by a Mu'ayyadī, and that was the Governorship of Gaza,[41] by January 1453 Jaqmaq presided over what looks like a Mu'ayyadī regime, with Mu'ayyadīs holding the posts of *Amīr Majlis*, *Dawādār*, *Ḥājib*, and the governorships of Safed, Gaza and Karak.[42] Incidentally, Khushqadam by the end of the reign had moved on from emir of ten in Egypt to become emir of a hundred in Damascus.

When Jaqmaq died, the Mu'ayyadīs, despite their apparently strong position in the regime, were outmanoeuvred. (The mass of the young mamluks, the street fighters, were by now ex-mamluks of Barsbāy or Jaqmaq). From 1453–61, the interregnum of Jaqmaq's son al-Manṣūr 'Uthmān[43] and the reign of al-Ashraf Ināl,[44] their careers were mostly in the doldrums. Once heady days of street fighting were over in 1453, they were not particularly at risk. A few did well for themselves and Khushqadam became *Amīr Silāḥ*. I here note that Jānibak Shaykh remains without rank or *iqṭā'*. As he enters his 60's, he must be beginning to worry about his pension rights.

In 1461, however, senior Mu'ayyadīs engaged in some smart manoeuvring and, with the necessary cooperation of other factions of old mamluks, set aside Ināl's

designated son and heir, al-Mu'ayyad Aḥmad.[45] Mu'ayyadīs at the top, backed by middle rank Mu'ayyadīs all over Egypt and Syria, emirs of forty, deputy *ḥājibs*, guard commanders and the like, naturally backed one of their own number, Khushqadam al-Mu'ayyadī, to be the next sultan.[46] But al-Ẓāhir Khushqadam came to power not only with the support of his own *khushdāsh*, and not only as their triumphal candidate, but also as front man for old emirs and mamluks of Jaqmaq. But one cannot be grateful to too many people. So once in power, Khushqadam worked hard to diminish the grip of the second group. He seems to have had the leader of their faction, Jānibak al-Ẓāhirī, murdered in 1463.[47] Khushqadam's reign (865/1461–872/1467) was the Indian summer of the Mu'ayyadī faction. Men like Mughulbāy Ṭāz went from emir of ten to emir of a hundred. Qānībay al-Maḥmūdī became *Amīr Silāḥ*, Yashbak al-Faqīh became *Dawādār*, Yalbāy Chief *Ḥājib*. Even Jānibak Shaykh, a trooper for so many years, at last obtained a tiny *iqṭā'*. Other similar rejects among the Mu'ayyadīs received their first emirates. Ibn Taghrībirdī notes that the Mu'ayyadīs were by now a small group of about fifty, but that most of them were emirs.[48]

And when Khushqadam died in 1467, the emirs naturally chose another Mu'ayyadī to succeed him, Yalbāy, called Tālī in Turkish, "*aw bi'l-'arabī majnūn*", or in English "the madman".[49] The trouble with Yalbāy as Sultan was no longer the youthful wildness that conferred the nickname, but the fact that he was by now senile. He fell into the wrong hands in the Citadel. A plan by senior, and indeed rather enfeebled, Mu'ayyadīs to rescue him misfired. Yalbāy was deposed and replaced by Timurbughā and then quite shortly by Qāytbāy, all in the same year, 1467. Timurbughā and Qāytbāy removed ageing Mu'ayyadīs from high office and replaced them with Ashrafī and other younger formations of royal mamluks. That was the end of the Mu'ayyadī faction. Like most mamluk factions it perished of old age. The Mu'ayyadī group played no further part in Mamluk politics. They lingered on as individuals, of course. Two emirs of ten were still on active service as rather elderly junior officers in the campaigns against the Turkoman prince Shāh Siwār in 1468 and 1471.[50] The last great Mu'ayyadī emir, Yashbak al-Faqīh, former Grand *Dawādār*, was called away from peaceful retirement and studies of the traditions of the Prophet by death in 1473 or 74. The last Mu'ayyadī to hold *iqṭā'* in Egypt, Tanam al-Faqīh, an emir of ten, died in 882/1477–8, "*shahīdan bi'l-ishāl*" (a martyr to diarrhoea).

The story of the Mu'ayyadīs related above calls for some comment. It is brief and leaves out everything that is interesting. So, on the whole, do the Arabic chronicles of the period. In medieval Arab accounts of political processes, it is the silences, compunctions, absences, the dogs that do not bark in the night, that are interesting. In the history of this and of other mamluk factions we hear nothing about a political programme, nothing about popular support or lack of it, nothing about political motivation, nothing about the role of women, nothing about the social cost of this internecine feuding.

A first comment is almost explicit in the narrative as given above. Yes,

Mamluk history seems chaotic, the rise and fall of sultans, emirs and mamluks apparently determined by violence and treachery. Yet in fact the strongest single motor force within that history is something more rational. It is the great and awesome principle of "Buggins's turn". The principle of "Buggins's turn" is all pervasive in Circassian Mamluk history. Even at the highest level only old men were suitable as sultans. One step below, at the level of the senior office-holding emirs, the same principle prevailed. Slowly, slowly a step at a time, and when one had reached the senior office of *Atābak al-ʿAsākir*, the general understanding was that one had first go at becoming the next sultan. When Yalbāy al-Mu'ayyadī leapt from *Amīr Ākhūr* to *Atābak al-ʿAsākir* (i.e. from 5th to 1st rank in the hierarchy), there was a certain *frisson*. Similarly when Qānībay al-Ḥasanī went off to be Governor of the province of Tripoli without having first been an emir of one hundred in Egypt, Ibn Taghrībirdī commented that this was unprecedented.[51] Of course factionalism and violence played a great role in determining the pattern of Circassian Mamluk history, but age and experience played an even greater role, and for the individual they tended to determine where he had got in the cursus that ran from trooper to sultan.

It was different in the more fluid and emergency ridden days of the early Baḥrīs, when quite young officers were appointed to struggle with senior jobs in the administration. But in the last days of Mu'ayyadī power under Khushqadam and Yalbāy, affairs are faintly reminiscent of Angus Wilson's *The Old Men at the Zoo*, and by the mid 1460's the Mu'ayyadī gerontocrats were too old to retain power. For obvious reasons mamluks were often vague about their age, but there is no reason to doubt the obituarists' claims that by the 1460's many of the Mu'ayyadīs were in their seventies and eighties. But there is another side to this coin. In every single succession crisis in the period in question the purchased mamluks of the deceased Sultan are outmanoeuvred and ousted by factions of older mamluks. The purchased mamluks lack rank and experience. Political decisions are made by senior officers with the crucial backing of the subalterns in Cairo's garrisons, the emirs of ten and forty, the *ra's nawba*s and the *khāṣṣakiyya*.

One could also comment that the Mu'ayyadīs are a party without ideology, that is, a faction. At no point during this half a century odd do the Mu'ayyadīs or their opponents proclaim "We are for good government, or legitimism, or a stricter observance of the *sharīʿa* in public affairs, or retrenchment in public spending, or an aggressive forward policy against the Turkomans in Asia Minor", or, (even more vaguely), "we are in favour of bringing back the good old days" (a recurring theme in medieval English and French history). The issue is, and only is, who shall have office and money? Mu'ayyadīs? Or Ẓāhirīs? or Ashrafīs? There is no polemic or debate about broader issues. Celebrations and eulogies were written for Circassian Sultans which went to great pains to legitimize them, but they were *post facto* and written by civilians like al-ʿAynī and Ibn ʿArabshāh.[52] Not only were they written by civilians, but their pietistic and highly literary terms of

reference suggest that they were written for civilians. Al-Asadī wrote a treatise, *al-Taysīr wa'l-i'tibār*, about rural problems and administrative corruption.[53] Khalīl al-Ẓāhirī's manual of government, the *Zubda kashf al-mamālik*,[54] is to a very large extent a polemic in favour of bringing back the pomp and extravagance of the good old days, but neither of these works was taken up by political parties. The welfare of the commonweal was not an issue in Mamluk civil wars and *coups d'état*. And when a Mu'ayyadī mamluk, Khushqadam, does come to power, he makes no attempt to repeat Shaykh's reforms in the household and the army (measures against military pluralism, closer control of *ḥalqa iqṭā'*s, cuts in palace expenditure, etc.). It is somewhat fanciful perhaps, but maybe we should envisage the Mu'ayyadīs as a faction operating within a single ideology, a one party state, whose leader is the Sultan and whose ideology is Islam.

It should be noted also that the bond of *khushdāshiyya* was not absolute. It did not stop an overlarge band of *khushdāsh* splitting several ways, nor did it stop individual Mu'ayyadīs taking the unexpected side. For example, Taghrībirdī Akhū Qaṣruh backed Ṭaṭār's purge of his Mu'ayyadī generation peers, and was rewarded by promotion to *Amīr Akhūr*.[55] Though the bond of *khushdāshiyya* was quite strong, it was not so much an emotional bond as a flag of tactical convenience. What *khushdāshiyya* conveyed was expectations of mutual service and of log rolling. There was, as far as I can tell, no actual indoctrination in loyalty to the *ustādh* (master, owner and manumitter of the mamluks) and to the *khushdāsh*. There is nothing for the Mamluk period corresponding to the early XVIIIth century Japanese manual, the *Hagakure*, which instructs the samurai in devoted service to his *daimyo*.[56] A mamluk served his master because his master served him, and there was money involved. The Mu'ayyadīs (as far as I can tell) had no special badges, flags, songs or epic poems. If they had clubrooms or favourite meeting places, it has gone unrecorded. They could command no natural body of support among the tribesmen or peasantry.

My next comment is in flat contradiction to one of the findings of Mottahedeh for Buyid society. Mottahedeh found the oath bond to be strong and respected in Buyid society.[57] But in the Mamluk period the oath bond seems remarkably weak. Again and again dying Sultans – al-Mu'ayyad, al-Ẓāhir Ṭaṭār, Barsbāy and Jaqmaq – make their emirs and mamluks take an oath of loyalty to the designated son as heir.[58] Ināl's son, Aḥmad, drafted specific penalty clauses involving going on the *ḥājj*, manumitting mamluks and other matters.[59] But within months or days, the oaths were dishonoured. Invariably. Occasionally conspiratorial emirs took an oath so as to give their plot some sort of cohesion. For example, some emirs took an oath to a certain Jānim, contender for the Sultanate in 1461, but circumstances changed and the oath was forgotten, except by the chronicler Ibn Taghrībirdī.[60] Sometimes emirs defeated in factional strife surrendered to *amān* (safe conduct).[61] Oaths were taken guaranteeing this safe conduct. The oaths were usually broken. On a related subject, the mamluk's loyalty to his *ustādh* or

master seems to have been of a rather restricted and utilitarian nature. The Japanese tale of *The Forty Seven Ronin* celebrates the way in which the leaderless forty seven samurai after much time and trouble avenged their murdered master and then committed *seppuku*.[62] Such a tale could never have issued out of Mamluk Egypt. Once one's master has died or been executed or murdered, his mamluks look around for new masters, sponsors and allies. They still cohere as an interest group, but they do not seek blood vengeance. Although al-ʿAynī wrote of Circassians pursuing blood feuds to the last man in their native Circassia,[63] this was not the practice in Circassian Egypt. Unlike beduin society, or even Ottoman Mamluk society, there is no vendetta, only regroupings. In time the Mu'ayyadī mamluks will come to ally themselves with the Nāṣirīs (the mamluks of al-Nāṣir Faraj whom Mu'ayyad Shaykh displaced) and with the Ashrafīs (the mamluks of Barsbāy who lorded it over the Sultanate for fifteen years after Shaykh's death). Sound political calculations, not honour, determined these factional alignments.

It is also striking that these are relatively bloodless putschs and civil wars. This comment is hardly original. Ibn Taghrībirdī said it first. Writing in the 1450's or 60's about the bloodlessness of all Mamluk wars in the XVth century, he observed that (not counting the battle against Tīmūr outside Aleppo in 1400) there was nothing to match the bloodiness of the battle of Shaqhab in 1390, between Barqūq and the Emir Minṭāsh, at which nevertheless not more than fifty men were killed on all sides.[64] Fighting for the succession in Cairo was more in the nature of a voting by a show of swords than anything a medieval Englishman would recognise as a civil war. The street fighting in Cairo tended to be a matter of armed demonstrations rather than hard hand-to-hand, life or death fighting. It was usually restricted to one area of the City around the horse market and the Citadel. The mamluks rode around in armoured demonstration and occasionally engaged in skirmishes. If nothing had been decided by the end of the day, they went home to bed, and foregathered on the following morning. Partisans tended to be constantly looking over their shoulders to see how many were on their side and how many were on the other. If they sensed that they were on the wrong side, part of a losing minority, then they would drift over to the other side. It did not take long, four days in 1438, seven days in 1453, two days in 1461, one day in 1468. In this sense the restricted violence of Mamluk succession disputes can be seen as tending towards a form of consensus politics. (So the story of Mamluk factionalism does not have the melancholy conclusion of Bulliet's bloody and self-destructive patricians of Nishapur). Since everyone wanted to be on the winning side, by the time an emir actually reached the throne room his faction might be inordinately large. It was usually necessary after the first flush of victory celebrations to purge the dispensable fringes of the winning coalition, in order that the fruits of victory could be shared out less fairly and more profitably.[65]

One period of Mamluk history is not like another. Though factions had been

broadly based in the reign of Barqūq and would be again after Qāytbāy, in this period they are not. Some of the common rabble were recruited for the day during street fighting between Jaqmaq and Qurqmās in Cairo in 1438; Qurqmās promised dīnārs, while Jaqmaq actually threw money about in the street, and so a rabble collected on both sides.[66] But usually even this degree of popular participation was missing and the mamluks liked to settle affairs amongst themselves. A rebel governor in Aleppo, Taghrībirmish, did try to play the Turkoman card against the Sultan Jaqmaq in 1439, but he failed.[67] The citizens of Aleppo were hostile to the use of such indisciplined tribal soldiery; doubtless some had unpleasant memories of how Barqūq, Minṭāsh and others had used Turkoman and beduin followings in the 1390's. Generally, in this period, (c. 1412–70), the factions do not call on tribal support or upon rural or urban factions or militias. Indeed it does not seem that urban militias linked to tribal feud moieties were always there to be called upon. A careful reading of the sources suggests that even during the troubled last decades of the XIVth century, inhabitants of the quarters and suburbs of Damascus and Aleppo did not fight for Barqūq or Minṭāsh out of partisanship, but because they had been dragooned into doing so.[68]

In the late XIVth century the centuries old (and somewhat notional) hostility of the Qays and Yaman tribal moieties to one another had had a role in Syrian political life. In the countryside during the 1380's and 1390's Qays-Yaman feuding had been endemic among the nomadic and settled Arabs of Syria (the *'urbān* and the *'ushrān*). Minṭāsh had recruited Yamanī partisans from the Syrian desert and the villages of the Lebanon and Palestine. His successful rival Barqūq recruited Qaysīs.[69] This was a unique phenomenon in Mamluk history. The alignment of power seeking mamluk factions to traditional Arab tribal feuding moieties had never happened before. It did not happen again. Not only did the Mu'ayyadīs not look for Qaysī or Yamanī support, it is not altogether clear whether the moieties always existed to be recruited. After the bloodletting of the 1380's and 90's, the Qays and Yaman dispute seems to have gone into abeyance to revive at a local level in disputes over pasturage and water rights in the Syrian countryside in perhaps the 1440's.[70] But even in the later decades of Circassian history, the reports of European observers do not suggest that the common people had a part to play in higher politics, nor did they suffer from the Mamluk wars. Writing about the revolt of Qānṣūh Khamsumi'a in 1497, Arnold von Harff wrote "The war did not concern the country, nor the country the war, only the Mamluks fought amongst themselves and those of their party."[71] Looking back on his experiences in Mamluk Egypt, Leo Africanus noted that the common people had no weapons, and that fights were quickly over and settled with a peace feast.[72]

A related point can be made from the same data, that is that though Shaykh came to power on the backs of a coalition recruited in Syria, he was the last do so. In the course of the rest of the century a few attempts would be made to secure the

succession from Syria, but they would all fail. This is in contrast to events in the late XIVth century, when governors of Damascus and Aleppo seem to have possessed the resources at times to determine the succession to the Sultanate. It is hard to explain, but between the invasion of Tīmūr and the rise of Shāh Siwār in the 1460's, the Mamluks did not have to face any serious invasion of Syria. Perhaps the Syrian army was stood down and some units disbanded?

Turning to another aspect of the Mamluk political system, my next comment is that though it is customary to describe the Mamluks as a military élite and this is fair enough as an impressionistic evocation of a bygone institution, the mamluks were not so very military, nor taken as a whole much of an élite either. As for the military aspect, most of the Mu'ayyadīs, though they enjoyed a reputation for military prowess and discipline, seem rarely to have raised a sword or even a voice in anger. They studied, administered, wheeled and dealed. These soldiers almost certainly had a higher life expectancy than the peasants they affected to protect. Most of the Mu'ayyadīs died of strokes, hernia, gout – whatever the medical vocabulary of medieval Arabic allowed. They died in their sixties, seventies and eighties. It is at least as accurate to regard them as a political militia as a military formation.

And how much of an élite were they? Mu'ayyad Shaykh purchased 5000 mamluks. I have been able to trace the bare outlines of the careers of perhaps about sixty through obituary notices provided by Ibn Taghrībirdī and al-Sakhāwī – and Ibn Taghrībirdī goes so far as to provide notices of such small fry as Jānibak Shaykh whose career I have followed with malicious interest, or there was Jakam who eventually became an emir of ten, but whom Ibn Taghrībirdī says was "of no importance, surviving under the protection of his *khushdāsh*". Then there was Jānim, "one of the rabble of al-Mu'ayyad's mamluks" who, towards the end of a long life of obscurity and poverty, eventually went to the Sultan Ināl and asked to be executed or given an *iqṭā'*, and so at last became noteworthy. Many such dullards secured entries in the biographical dictionaries, but compendious though Sakhāwī's *Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'* is, most Mu'ayyadīs were not listed in it. In the life of "servitude and military grandeur", there was more of the former than the latter.

Most mamluks, whether they belonged to a successful faction or not, were destined to a career of hardship or obscurity. After early training, only a minority could be lodged in the Citadel – about 5000. The rest went out to lodgings in the city.[73] As far as most mamluks are concerned, instead of visualizing the glamorous life of sport and ceremonial in the Citadel we should envisage seedy boarding houses in the City and, doubtless, tiresome landlords. Certainly they rioted and fought with the black slaves, the grooms and bath attendants they rubbed shoulders with.[74] A mamluk's chance of becoming a *khāṣṣakī* was small. His chance of becoming an emir of ten mamluks and getting a first *iqṭā'* was extremely small. His chance of going further, without special contacts, even

smaller. In the meantime they existed on poor quality rations and inadequate pay. Most mamluks lived and died as simple mamluks, they never became emirs. When Qāytbāy took over in 1467, he imprisoned an important handful of Mu'ayyadīs in Alexandria, another five emirs were packed off to Syria and some elderly emirs simply retired gracefully. That still left some twenty or so Mu'ayyadīs in Egypt, old soldiers in their sixties, seventies and eighties, who had never possessed an emirate or *iqṭā'*. They could be left to fade away. Numbers fluctuated, but at any one time in Egypt there were approximately 10–20 emirs of a hundred, about 20 emirs of forty, about 50 emirs of ten and a handful of slightly anomalous emirs of five or twenty, giving a total officer establishment in Egypt of around 90.[75] Even when one has taken into account a larger number of less highly graded jobs in Syria, it is evident that only the most able of the hundreds of Mu'ayyadīs, Ashrafīs and Ẓāhirīs purchased every year were ever going to get anywhere. Piloti reckoned that about 2000 mamluks were bought every year.[76]

Clearly Mamluk factions were not exclusively military. Shaykh, to collect his vast retinue, the Syrian equivalent of *ronin*, needed money, needed bankers and needed civilian support (and in fact large sums of money were sent to him from Egypt by Faraj's treacherous *Ustādār*.) At the same time as he built up a military clientèle, he collected a civilian clientèle. Shaykh was exceptional in the size of the civilian élite he picked up in Syria, but he was not alone in acquiring one. The Qāḍī 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-Dimashqī, al-Tāj al-Shuwaykhī and Ibn al-Muzhir were all civilian administrators picked up by the Emir Shaykh in Syria.[77] During his Sultanate they all became rich and powerful administrators in Egypt. According to Ibn Iyās, when Barsbāy came to the throne he confirmed them in high office or promoted them still further, and this was done, Ibn Iyās says, to placate the disappointed young Mu'ayyadī mamluks.[78] Later on the Sultan Jaqmaq (who had been backed by the Mu'ayyadīs) was to marry daughters of two of Shaykh's civilian clientèle, 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ and Ibn al-Bārizī.[79] After Shaykh's death, further alliances were forged between Mu'ayyadī emirs and civilian administrators. That the Emir Tanam min 'Abd al-Razzāq did exceptionally well during the reign of Barsbāy was due to the friendship and sponsorship of the *Nāẓir al-Khāṣṣ* (Overseer of the Private Purse), Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Kātib Jakam.[80] The Emirs did not monopolize political power, and the financial *nāẓirs* of the regime often had more power than most of them.

Nor was the distribution of high office a pure and simple matter of factional patronage and the manipulation of a balance of power. It could also be, for the Circassian Sultans, a form of tax farming. For instance Jānibak al-Tājī al-Mu'ayyadī moved from the governorship of Beirut to that of Gaza, then Safed, then Hama, all thanks to bribery for he had little ability. Muqbil al-Mu'ayyadī had to pay 12000 dīnārs to retain the governorship of Safed.[81] The successful bidder for the office of *Ḥājib al-Ḥujjāb* or the governorship of Tripoli could in the long run expect to recoup his losses, but he would need money to begin with. He

would need a loan shark and the men with money tended to be not so much merchants, as *ustādārs*, *nāẓirs*, viziers and scribes who had done well out of the administration.

Another comment seems called for. These Mu'ayyadīs, taken as a whole, seem intellectually undistinguished. Perhaps this was uncharacteristic. My impression is that they compare rather poorly with the Nāṣirī emirs who had received their formation at the court of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn in the XIVth century, or the Ashrafī emirs who came together at the court of Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in the XVIth century. Among all the Mu'ayyadīs, I have found only one fully fledged intellectual, Taghrībirmish who studied history, literature and *ḥadīth* and who wrote poetry in Arabic and Turkish. Three or four others studied *ḥadīth* or *fiqh*, but of these two at least seem to have taken up study in retirement. In this period Islamic law was a popular option for clever mamluks, but not among the Mu'ayyadīs. However, Ṭaṭār, their great enemy, was not only a student of Muslim law but qualified to give *fatwās*, and had been much relied on by Shaykh to give advice on legal points.[82]

Then there is the matter of family politics, of hidden connections through women, of the implicit rights that political marriages conferred. This is difficult, almost impossible, to discuss. Arab chroniclers might mention a marriage but they had a compunction about discussing the affairs of the harem. Clearly certain marriages conferred rights and prestige. Shaykh as Sultan was at pains to marry his predecessor Faraj's half-sister and his son, Prince Ibrāhīm, married a daughter of Faraj's.[83] Similarly the Sultan Ṭaṭār took the trouble to forge links with his predecessor by marrying the mother of Shaykh's surviving son.[84] One aspect of this sort of marriage may have been to secure some sort of control over the predecessor's private estate, but this needs further investigation. Jaqmaq's marriages to daughters of Arab bureaucrats have already been mentioned. Clearly politics came into marriages. I doubt if the marriage link formed between Tanam al-Mu'ayyadī and a female relative of Jaqmaq's was a purely sentimental one. On the other hand sentiment clearly entered into politics, and Badr al-Dīn ibn Sūdūn al-Faqīh (the son of a mamluk and therefore only one of the *awlād al-nās*), would never have become an emir of a hundred in Egypt if he had not been Ṭaṭār's brother-in-law.[85] I have little doubt that in the XVth century there was a close network of political marriage alliances, even if that network is largely invisible to us now.

To conclude, the Mamluk élite was more closely connected to the civilian élite than might appear at first glance. It is by no means true that all mamluks were members of the élite. Generally Circassian Mamluk politics were less violent and more sensibly conducted than I at least used to think. Conflicts were limited in area, personnel and duration. In its stress on aggression as a mark of ability the Mamluk system shows some similarity to modern Western business precepts,[86] and, in its stress on age, experience and dead men's shoes, Mamluk factional

politics more closely resemble our modern civil service practice than they do the fratricidal civil wars of England and France in the XVth century.

NOTES

* The revised text of a lecture read to the Royal Asiatic Society on 13 June 1985.

[1] E. W. Ives: *Faction in Tudor England*. (Historical Association pamphlet), London, 1979, p. 1. But, for a very different view of some of the same material, cf. L. B. Smith: *Treason in Tudor England: Politics and Paranoia*, London, 1986.

[2] M. A. Shaban: *Islamic History A.D. 600–750 A.H. 132. A New Interpretation*, Cambridge, 1971, esp. pp. 120f.

[3] R. W. Bulliet: *The Patricians of Nishapur: A Study in Medieval Islamic Social History*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1972.

[4] I. M. Lapidus: *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1967.

[5] R. P. Mottahedeh: *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*, Princeton, 1980.

[6] Apart from Ibn Taghrībirdī (see below), the chief Arabic sources in print on this period include al-Maqrīzī: *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, III–IV, ed. A. F. Ashour, Cairo, 1970–4; Ibn Ḥajar: *Inbā' al-Ghumr*, II–III, ed. Ḥ. Ḥabashī, Cairo, 1969; al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, I–XII, Cairo, 1934–6; *idem*: *Al-Ṭibr al-Masbūk*, Cairo, 1896; al-Jawharī b. al-Ṣayrafī: *Nuzhat al-Nufūs*, II–III, ed. Ḥ. Ḥabashī, Cairo, 1971–4; Anonymous: *Ḥawliyāt Dimashqiyya*, ed. Ḥ. Ḥabashī, Cairo, 1968; Ibn Iyās: *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, I–III, Cairo, 1893–5; *idem*: *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr*, I–V, eds. P. Kahle and M. Mostafa, Istanbul and Wiesbaden, 1931–75. It should be noted that there are very substantial differences between the two editions of the *Badā'i'*. Whether either or both texts is entirely the work of Ibn Iyās remains to be determined.

[7] Piloti: *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti sur le Passage en Terre Sainte*, ed. P. H. Dopp, Louvain, 1958.

[8] On Ibn Taghrībirdī's life, see W. Popper s.v. "Abū'l Maḥāsin" in *EI*², and the literature cited there; C. Petry: *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton, 1981, pp. 7, 10.

[9] Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhira*, ed. and tr. W. Popper, *University of California Publications in Semitic Philology*, V–VII, XIII, XIV, XVII–XIX, XXII, Berkeley, 1915–60. Those sections of his other chronicle *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr* which contain additional material to the *Nujūm* have been edited by W. Popper in *University of California Publications in Semitic Philology*, VIII, Berkeley, 1930–1. The greater part of Ibn Taghrībirdī's biographical dictionary, the *Manhal*, is unpublished, but see Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Manhal al-Ṣafi*, I–II, ed. M. M. Amīn, Cairo, 1984–5. M. Wiet. "Les Biographies du Manhal Safi", *Mémoires présentées à l'Institut d'Egypte*, XIX, 1932, is a summary analysis of the contents of the entire work. The *Manhal* was completed before the *Nujūm* and its obituaries of mamluk emirs only occasionally provide information not found in the *Nujūm* for this period.

[10] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 291–4.

[11] *Nujūm*, 687, 760; *Ḥawādith*, p. 657.

[12] *Nujūm*, VII, p. 408.

[13] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 674–5.

[14] On Commynes's views on the rise and fall of princes, see in particular J. Dufournet: *La Destruction des mythes dans les Mémoires de Ph. de Commynes*, Geneva, 1966.

[15] On Shaykh's career as Emir, then Sultan, see *Nujūm* VI pp. 322–431, especially pp. 322–3, 427–31; al-Sakhāwī: *Ḍaw'*, pp. 308–11; al-'Aynī: *Al-Sayf al-muhannad fī sīrat al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad*, ed. M. Shaltūt, Cairo, 1967; P. M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517*, London, 1986, pp. 179–183.

[16] J. Wansbrough s.v. "Faradj" in *EI*².

[17] Unless otherwise noted below, observations on the careers of Mu'ayyadī emirs are based on their obituary notices given in Ibn Taghrībirdī's chronicle or in al-Sakhāwī's biographical dictionary, the *Ḍaw'*. 'Alī Bay al-'Ajamī (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 572; *Ḍaw'*, V, p. 151). 'Alī Bay min 'Alam Shaykh (*Nujūm*, VI, p. 506; *Ḍaw'*, V, p. 151). 'Allān (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 632–3; *Ḍaw'*, V, p. 150). Alṭunbughā al-Marqabī (*Nujūm*, VII, 272; *Ḍaw'*, V, 351). Āqbay (*Nujūm*, VI, pp. 374–5; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 314). Āqbirdī (*Ḍaw'*, II, p. 312). Arikmās (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 377–8; *Ḍaw'*, II, p. 268).

Aytamish (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 310). Barsbay (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 375; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 10. Bayghūt (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 570–1). Dawlatbay (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 567; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 220–1). Jakam (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 600–1; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 76. Jānibak Shaykh (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 60). Jānibak (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 60). Jānibak al-Qawwāmi (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 275). Jānibak al-Tājī (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 791). Jānibak al-Shamsī (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 587; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 57). Jānibak al-Maḥmūdī (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 591; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 60). Jānibak al-Zaynī (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 56). Jānim Ḥarāmī Shakl (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 805). Jānim (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 592; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 65). Julbān (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 78). Kasbāy (*Ḍaw'*, VI, p. 229). Kasbāy al-Shishmānī (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 809–10; *Ḍaw'*, VI, pp. 228–9). Khayrbak al-Ajrūd (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 582–3; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 209–10). Khayrbak al-Ashqar (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 625; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 210). Khushqadam (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 687–9; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 175–6). Māmish (*Ḍaw'*, VI, p. 235). Mughulbāy (*Ḍaw'*, X, p. 164). Qānībāy al-Ḥamzāwī (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 619–20; *Ḍaw'*, VI, p. 195). Qānībāy al-Ḥasanī (*Ḍaw'*,VI, p. 195). Qānībāy al-Maḥmūdī (*Ḍaw'*, VI, p. 198). Qānībāy Qarā Saqal (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 627; *Ḍaw'*, VI, pp. 196–7). Qānim (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 814–6; *Ḍaw'*, VI, pp. 200–1). Shādhbak (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 290). Sūdūn al-Faqih (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 811; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 276). Sūdūn al-Abūbakrī (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 767; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 276). Sūdūn Qarā Qash (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 763; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 276–7). Sūdūn al-Atmakjī (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 338; *Ḍaw'*, III, p. 286). Taghrībirdī (*Nujūm*, VI, pp. 785–6; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 29–30). Tanam (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 45). Tanam al-Faqīh (*Ḍaw'*, III. p. 45). Tanam min 'Abd al-Razzāq (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 788–9; *Ḍaw'*, VI, p. 168). Timrāz (*Ḍaw'*, III, p. 38). Timrāz (*Nujūm*, VI, p. 849). Timrāz al-Musāri' (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 363; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 35–6). Ṭughān (*Ḍaw'*, IV, p. 13). Ṭūkh (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 296–7; *Ḍaw'*, IV, p. 10). Uzbak (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 601–2; *Ḍaw'*, II, p. 273). Yakhshibāy (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 259). Yalbāy (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 824–5, 839; *Ḍaw'*, X, pp. 287–8). Yalbughā (*Ḍaw'*, X, p. 290). Yarshbāy (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 640–1). Yashbak (*Nujūm*, VII, p. 641; *Ḍaw'*, X, 279). Yashbak al-Ṣūfī (*Nujūm*, VII, pp. 617–8; *Ḍaw'*, X, p. 270). Yashbak al-Inālī (*Nujūm*, VI, p. 506). Yashbak Āsh Qulaq (*Ḍaw'*, X, p. 275). Yashbak al-Yūsufī (*Nujūm*, VI, p. 546). Yashbak al-Faqīh (*Ḍaw'*, X, pp. 270–2). This is not, of course, by any means an exhaustive list of all the Mu'ayyadi emirs who received notices in Mamluk chronicles or biographical dictionaries.

[18] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 789–90.

[19] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 551–2.

[20] On the career of Emir, later Sultan, Ṭaṭār al-Ẓāhirī, *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 508–9; *Ḍaw'*, IV, pp. 7–8; al-Jawharī: *Nuzha*, II, pp. 513–4.

[21] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 807.

[22] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 780–1.

[23] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 442–3. Nawrūz had over 1000 mamluks in Syria. Wiet's index to Ibn Taghrībirdī's *Manhal* lists sixteen emirs with his nisba.

[24] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 312–3.

[25] D. Ayalon. "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army. III", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XVI, 1954, p. 69. For an example of a Council of Emirs, summoned to discuss the Dulghadirid threat in 840/1436–7, see Jawharī: *Nuzha*, III, p. 383.

[26] Jawharī: *Nuzha*, III, p. 485.

[27] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 430.

[28] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 477–508.

[29] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 478.

[30] Ayalon. "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army. I", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XV, 1953, pp. 225, 227. It should be noted that this was the number he purchased. He inherited or acquired by confiscation hundreds, perhaps thousands more.

[31] Ayalon, *op. cit.*, pp. 213–6; R. Irwin, *The Middle East in the middle ages. The early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382*, London, 1986, pp. 62–3.

[32] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 429–30.

[33] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 507.

[34] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 425.

[35] For the reign of Ṭaṭār and his more or less co-extensive purge of the Mu'ayyadīs, see *Nujūm*, pp. 508–20.

[36] On Barsbāy, see A. Darrag: *L'Egypte sous le règne de Barsbay*, Damascus, 1961.

[37] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 14, 18, 29, 30.

[38] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 32–253; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 71–4; M. Sobernheim s.v. "Čakmak" in *EI*².

[39] In almost every case promotion to an emirate of ten was from the ranks of the *Khāṣṣakiyya* and in many cases the promotion was coupled with appointment to an office as one of the junior *ra's nawbas*. The *ra's nawbas* seem to have commanded royal mamluks on guard patrol.

[40] Besides Sakhāwī's obituary of this minor figure, he also receives an obituary in Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Ḥawādith*, p. 716.

[41] Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Ḥawādith*, p. 441.

[42] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 237–9.

[43] On factional strife during the reign of al-Manṣūr ʿUthmān (really an interregnum), see *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 392–418.

[44] M. C. S. Tekindag s.v. "Ināl" in *EI*^{2}.

[45] *Nujūm*, pp. 662–80.

[46] On this Sultan, in addition to the obituary notices in listed in n. 17 above, see P. M. Holt s.v. "Khushḳadam" in *EI*^{2}.

[47] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 716–9, 775–7.

[48] Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Ḥawādith*, p. 442.

[49] On the reign of Yalbāy, see Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Ḥawādith*, 718–9; *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 824–39.

[50] Anonymous: *Ta'rīkh Qāytbāy al-Tarjama al-Sharīfa al-Ashrafiyya*, B. M. MS Or. 3028, f. 6b, 8b.

[51] Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Ḥawādith*, pp. 660, 718.

[52] Al-ʿAynī: *Al-Sayf al-Muhannad*; *idem*: (Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir), ed. H. Ernst, Cairo, 1962; Ibn ʿArabshāh: *Al-Taʾlīf al-ṭāhir fī shiyam al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, B. M. MS. Or. 3026.

[53] Al-Asadī: *Al-Taysīr wa'l-iʿtibār wa'l-taḥrīr wa'l-ikhtiyār*, ed. A. A. Ṭulaymāt, Cairo, 1967.

[54] Khalīl al-Ẓāhirī: *Zubda Kashf al-Mamālik*, ed. P. Ravaisse, Paris, 1894.

[55] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 518.

[56] Yukio Mishima: *Mishima on Hagakure*, London, 1977.

[57] On the strength of the oath bond in Buyid society, see Mottahedeh: *Loyalty and Leadership*, pp. 41–62.

[58] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 420, 516, 770–1, VII, 379.

[59] *Nujūm*, VII, p. 644.

[60] *Nujūm*, VII, p. 692.

[61] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 336–9, 562.

[62] H. P. Varley: *The Samurai*, London, 1970, pp. 123–5.

[63] Al-ʿAynī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir*, p. 6.

[64] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 688.

[65] For this phenomenon in the Baḥrī Mamluk period, see Irwin, *The Middle East in the middle ages*, pp. 153–4. However not all general observations on the operation of faction in the Baḥrī period apply to the Circassian period, or *vice-versa*.

[66] *Nujūm*, VII, p. 46.

[67] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 58–60, 63, 65–8.

[68] Ibn Ṣaṣrā: *A Chronicle of Damascus*, I, p. 115 indicates that the citizens of the Ṣalāḥiyya district of Damascus fought for the Emir Minṭāsh only because his troops were quartered there, and, in general, Ibn Ṣaṣrā makes it plain that he and most of his fellow citizens regarded Minṭāsh and his following of *ʿurbān*, (nomadic tribesmen) and Barqūq and his rival following of *ʿushrān* (settled or semi-nomadic tribesmen) with equal dread.

[69] On Qays and Kalb partisanship in the strife of the 1390s, see Lapidus: *Muslim Cities*, pp. 87–90, 165–7. But Lapidus has been misled by the fact that the Banū Kilāb quarter of Damascus backed Barqūq and deduced from this that Barqūq's following were Kalbīs. In fact the Banu Kilāb were by tradition a part of the Qaysī moiety and, as Qaysīs, backed Barqūq. See Ibn Ṣaṣrā: *Chronicle*, p. 53 and n.

[70] Jawharī: *Nuzha*, III, p. 411.

[71] Arnold von Harff: *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff. 1496–1499*, ed. M. Letts, London, 1946, p. 104.

[72] Leo Africanus: *Description de l'Afrique*, tr. C. Schefer, Paris, 1948, p. 376.

[73] In the reign of Barsbāy there were between 5000 and 6000 mamluks lodged in the Citadel at any one time, while 700–800 graduated every year and were sent to find lodgings in the city according to Piloti: *Passage*, pp. 54–5.

[74] Lapidus: *Muslim Cities*, pp. 171–2; B. Lewis: *Race and Color in Islam*, New York, 1971, pp. 74–6.

[75] D. Ayalon. "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army. II", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XV, 1953, pp. 467–71.

[76] Piloti: *Passage*, p. 54.

[77] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 789–90, VII, pp. 347–50; *Ḍaw'*, III, pp. 24–5.

[78] Ibn Iyās: *Badā'i'*, (Cairo ed.), II, pp. 16–17.

[79] Ibn Iyās: *Badā'i'*, (Cairo ed.), II. p. 35.

[80] *Nujūm*, VII, pp. 149, 161–2.

[81] *Nujūm*, VII, p. 791; Anonymous: *Ḥawliyāt*, pp. 49–50.

[82] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 510, 517, 519–20.

[83] *Nujūm*, VI, pp. 330, 779.

[84] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 500.

[85] *Nujūm*, VI, p. 519.

[86] For examples, see B. G. James: *Business Wargames*, Tunbridge Wells, 1984; R. J. Ringer: *Winning Through Intimidation*, Los Angeles, 1973. See also the Japanese manual on swordsmanship and strategy, said to be consulted by Wall Street executives – Miyatomo Musashi: *A Book of Five Rings*, London, 1974.

VI

The Image of the Byzantine and the Frank in Arab Popular Literature of the Late Middle Ages

The impact of Christendom on the medieval Near East was massive – at least in the perception of western historians. Irritatingly, the Arabs do not seem to have shared that perception. The geographer Mas'ūdī, writing in the tenth century, was able to list briefly the known races of Europe at the time, not forgetting the peoples of Gog and Magog. His *Murūj al-Dhahab* also offered a very garbled list of the early French kings. The Mosuli historian Ibn al-Athīr, writing in the thirteenth century, presented the First Crusade (not that he recognized it as a crusade or a religiously motivated movement) as part of a general explosion of Frankish aggression which started in the 1080s and which embraced the conquest of Toledo and Sicily, the raids on North Africa and, finally, the invasion of Syria. The fourteenth-century North African historian Ibn Khaldūn, knew quite a lot about Andalusian history, for this territory was traditionally covered by Muslim historiography, but, beyond that, he had next to no interest in the history and culture of Europe. These are thin gleanings. They can be supplemented by accounts written by Muslim travellers and ambassadors to Europe, or based on their reports. One thinks of such familiar and often cited passages as al-'Udhrī's description of a Viking whaling expedition off the coast of Ireland, al-Ghazāl's perhaps fictitious account of a flirtation with the daughter of a king of the Vikings, Hārūn ibn Yaḥyā on his sojourn as a captive in Constantinople and Rome, and Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's less plausible account of the City of Women in Europe.[1]

But little was written about Christendom – at least if one restricts oneself to the mainstream of Arabic literature produced in the early and central Middle Ages by the '*ulamā*', schooled in the preoccupations of the mosque and *madrasa*. The lack of interest in and knowledge of Europe, Byzantium, the papacy, and the Holy War is the more surprising when one considers the many meeting-points between Islam and Christendom and the plethora of potential channels of information. Wars encouraged the coming and going of ambassadors, hostages, and captives. Then, in the later Middle Ages, there were substantial

communities of European merchants resident in such cities as Alexandria, Aleppo, and Damascus.[2] There was also a Muslim community in Palaeologan Constantinople with its own mosque.

It is also plain that many of the governing elite in Egypt and Syria in the late Middle Ages had been born and raised in Christian Europe. Arabic sources tended to be reticent on the individual origins of Mamluk emirs and sultans, and were inclined on the whole to present the disingenuously oversimplified picture of the elite as being recruited entirely from Kipchak Turks and Circassians. However, if one turns to European travellers' accounts of visits to medieval Egypt, one finds Arnold von Harff enjoying drinking sessions with a Danish and a Swiss German mamluk in Cairo in 1497.[3] Felix Faber, in Cairo in 1483, met a Catalan and a Genoese mamluk who had been imprisoned because they were fed up and wanted to go home. He and his party were later visited in Cairo by Sicilian, Catalan, and German mamluks. Above all they met many Hungarians who had been enslaved in the course of the Ottoman wars in the Balkans. These Hungarians were reluctant converts to Islam. They drank wine and blasphemed happily against the religion that had been forced on them. Faber gained the impression that the entire mamluk elite consisted of apostates longing to return to Christianity.[4] This was a vast exaggeration, but certainly there were plenty of mamluks who could have given their new Muslim brothers reasonably accurate information about Europe. Only one Arab seems to have availed himself of such an opportunity, the fourteenth-century encyclopaedist al-'Umarī, who got his information about the West from the Mamluk Balaban. Balaban had begun life as Domenichino Doria in Genoa, before being enslaved as a Mamluk and meeting al-'Umarī in a Syrian prison.[5] But, while the Arabic sources seldom mention Frankish mamluks, one can deduce that an important section of the mamluk elite were of Greek origin. One Greek mamluk even succeeded in becoming a sultan; this was Khushqadam, sultan in the years 1461–67. Not that Greek mamluks were referred to as Greeks.[6] They were called *Rūmīs*, the Arabic for Greek is *Yunān*. By the Mamluk period, Byzantine citizens were not regarded as Greeks – at least, they were not regarded as belonging to the same race as Homer, Alexander, and Aristotle. The fourteenth-century Syrian geographer, Ibn al-Wardī, tells us that the former lands of the *Yūnān* were conquered and occupied by the Rūm. He presumably refers to the Roman conquest of Greece.[7]

Muslim geographers of the late Middle Ages (from the thirteenth century onwards) were products of mainstream clerical culture and on the whole they have little to say about Christendom that is both new and interesting. An exception must be made in favour of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's

wholly or partly fictitious account of his visit to Constantinople in 1332 or 1334, where he claims that he was lucky enough not only to meet the reigning emperor Andronicus III, but also met the dethroned and tonsured Andronicus II.[8] A second exception may be made in favour of the aforementioned al-'Umarī, who thanks to his conversations with the Genoese Balaban, managed to present a splendid evocation of fourteenth-century Constantinople: the abandoned Bucoleon Palace, full of larger than life statues and haunted by jinn; the emperor in the New Palace, given over to idleness, enjoying concerts on the psaltery, and a victim of bullying by his patriarch. The patriarch and his priests kept guard over books of secret knowledge in order to stop them falling into the hands of the Muslims; the Hagia Sophia was the repository of the famous treasure of Toledo. The citizens of Constantinople dress like Turks and have hair-dos like plates. The imperial family in Trebizond have little tails, as do quite a number of other Trapezuntines. Al-'Umarī (and Domenichino Doria) offer an equally strange perspective on western Christendom, in which the Germans featured as Europe's Mongols and Germany as a land continually traversed by nomads.[9] (One of the problems that the Arabs had in forming an accurate image of Europe was that Europeans themselves often had a rather fanciful image of their own continent.)

Usually geographies of the period restrict themselves to listing place names. Relatively rarely does one find a description of the people who lived there – though an exception was often made for the Galicians of northern Spain – a ghastly people, ignorant and stupid, who never wash their clothes but wear them until they fall to pieces. They also, Ibn al-Wardī tells us, visit one another's homes without permission, by which he means that they seduce each others' wives.[10] But, generally, geographies are short on human interest and it is rare for the stereotyped description of a region to be accompanied by the racial stereotype that is appropriate for the region.

To some extent this gap can be filled by consulting treatises on the purchase of slaves. According to one such treatise, written by al-Saqaṭī in the early thirteenth century, Byzantine women are good for guarding and looking after possessions.[11] An anonymous work of the same period puts more flesh on this. The Byzantines generally have clear complexions, smooth hair, and blue eyes; they are obedient slaves, good for service and positions of trust; they are knowledgeable, careful, splendid, and very intelligent: the young slave is very teachable. They are wise and intelligent, but also mean, greedy, and stingy. For this reason their women are good for looking after the home.[12] This account is rather favourable – particularly if one compares it with the assessment of the Frank:

> They are light in colouring and mostly blue-eyed. They are big and brave, but also stupid and uncultured. However in handicrafts and similar skills they are very deft, practised, and interested. They are mean and greedy. One does not rely on them as slaves. They believe in their religion. Their women are good for nothing, for they are uncouth, brutish, and pitiless.[13]

The estimates of the qualities of the Byzantines and the Franks were supported elsewhere in other such treatises. The Byzantine, as a careful guardian of property, was practically a *topos*, and the judgement that Franks were unreliable and their conversions to Islam insincere was echoed later on.

However, it is unlikely that many Arabs derived their image of Christendom from a reading of texts on history and geography. It is arguable, that outside the precincts of academic institutions, the present-day historical consciousness of the British people has been moulded as much by historical fiction as it has been by historiography, and perhaps the same could be said for the Islamic Middle Ages. The common people and, to a degree, the governing elite, may have derived their images of past times and foreign parts from romantic fiction, from such romantic sagas as those of 'Antar, the Banī Hilāl, and Dhā't al-Himma.[14] The popularity of such fiction, heroic, and chivalric epics, was not of course restricted to the Arabs in the eastern Mediterranean. The Turks had their Sayyid Batal and *Danishmendname*; the Armenians had the epic of David Sassoun, the Georgians had *The Knight of the Panther Skin*. The Byzantines had *Digenes Akritas* and *Belthandros and Chrysantza*. It was a common taste in fiction and inevitably there was a lot of borrowing of plot motifs and images between the various cultures.

Some motifs were almost ageless and drifted, culture free. Many themes and motifs are common to Arab and Byzantine fiction: the lovers meeting, separating and finally being reunited, the castle of love, the half-caste hero, the Amazon warrior antagonist and so on. So much work has been done now on the (generally earlier) fiction of 'Antar, Sayyid Baṭal, and Delhemma and their links with non-Arab literature, especially with Digenes Acritas, that they will not be discussed here. Instead, *The Thousand and One Nights*, the *Sīrat of Baybars* and some other less familiar works of fiction will be briefly discussed, before moving on to fiction in less familiar contexts.

Gustave von Grunebaum's study of 'Greek Form Elements in the Thousand and One Nights' suggested that much of the material in the 'Nights' derives not from hypothetical Indo-Persian sources via the lost Persian story collection, *Hazār Afsāna*, but rather from classical and

later Greek sources.[15] (Perry's work on the sources of the Sindibad cycle of stories in Arabic similarly led him to postulate a western source for the frame rather than an Indian one. In the case of the Sindibad [Syntipas] cycle, the source was the legend of Secundus the Silent.)[16] The theory that there was an Indian and then a Persian source for the conjectural core of the *Nights* as it existed in the tenth century depends heavily on the testimony of two tenth-century Arabs. In a discussion of fanciful tales of the early Arabs, al-Mas'ūdī wrote that they were 'of the same type as the books which have been transmitted to us and translated for us from the Persian [Pahlavi], Indian and Greek, and which were written along similar lines: such as *Kitāb Hazār Afsāna*, which means in Arabic a 'Thousand Fables'...; people call this book a 'Thousand Nights'...'.[17] Ibn al-Nadīm wrote later and had certainly read al-Mas'ūdī. The bookseller and cataloguer, Ibn al-Nadīm, claimed that the Sassanian Persians were the first people to collect entertaining stories and the first such book to be written was the *Hazār Afsāna*. He went on to describe its frame story of Shahrazad and the king, a frame story which closely resembles that story of the Arabic 'Nights' as we find it in Arabic manuscripts from the fifteenth century onwards. The passage (which is long) has been much quoted.[18]

Another passage, a little later on in the same chapter of Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* has escaped discussion so far. In this second passage he lists 'The Names of the Books of the Byzantines about Evening Stories, Histories, Fables and Proverbs'. One of the books in the list is *Samsa wa-Dimn* which, according to Ibn al-Nadīm, was very like the famous Arab *Kalīla wa Dimna*, but not as well written. The last book on the list sounds even more interesting; it is *Shaṭariyus the King and the Reason for his Marrying Shāzād the Storyteller*.[19] 'Shaṭariyus' is probably a mistranscription of Shahriyarus, a Greek rendering of the *Arabian Nights*' King Shāhriyār. The existence of a Greek version of the *Nights* in the tenth century gives cause for thought. Perhaps a translation was made from a Persian or Arab version of the *Nights* prototype into Greek some time before the tenth century. If so, its subsequent possible dissemination and influence could be investigated by Byzantinists with a command of the literary sources. (It is noteworthy that Goossens claimed in 'Recherches recentes sur l'epopée byzantine' that almost every element in *Digenes Akritas* has a parallel somewhere or other in *The Thousand and One Nights*.)[20] Much less likely, though it cannot be flatly ruled out, is that the core of the early Arabic *Nights*, (and we do not know what was in that core), came not from Persia, as al-Mas'ūdī and Ibn al-Nadīm believed, but from the Greek stories circulating in the Byzantine period.

However, let us now turn to the content of the *Nights* themselves, the

Arabic stories as collected from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries and the information they provide on the Arab perception of Franks and Byzantines. The long rambling epic of 'Umar al-Nu'mān in the *Nights*, whose earliest surviving recension is from the fifteenth century, is the richest in relevant material. As is characteristic in such epics, events take place within the framework of a legendary and telescoped time; there are jumbled and garbled apparent references to the Arab siege of Constantinople in 717, to Seljuk wars in Iran and Anatolia, to the Second Crusade's siege of Damascus and to specific crusaders. The individual Frank and Greek were not favourably portrayed: the Byzantine warrior, Luqa, had the face of an ass, shape of an ape, and look of a snake; the Byzantine dowager, Dhāt al-Dawāhī, was a witch, lesbian, and poisoner. However, though we can be pretty sure that 'Umar al-Nu'mān was in the process of composition during the period of the crusades and of the corresponding Jihad, there is a lack of real jihad spirit in the epic.[21] Although the Arabs do fight the Franks, the romance does not present the struggle as a war for the Faith, and, though the Frankish armies are preceded by priests and crosses, the Franks are only involved in the war as Byzantine auxiliaries. The wars with Byzantium are fought over women and battles are opportunities for displays of individual heroism.

In other stories the ill-omened, blue-eyed Frank features as the villain – ''Alā' al-Dīn Abū al-Shamat',[22] ''Alī Shar and Zumurrud',[23] ''Alī Nūr al-Dīn and Miriam the Girdle Girl'[24] – but the Muslim heroes (if that is the word, for some of them are really rather unheroic compared with their women) struggle not for the triumph of Islam but to rescue captive princesses. In contrast to the slave purchase manuals, the romancers regard Frankish and Christian women as rather desirable. Conversion is a common subject in the *Nights*, but more precisely it is the conversion of women which is the subject. ('The Tale of the Prior who Became a Muslim' is only superficially an exception, for the real function of the prior in the story is to testify to the conversion of a Christian woman to Islam.) The Frankish women convert for love, or, in Husn Miriam's case, because she has discovered that Muḥammad's coming is foretold in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. By contrast, male converts from Christianity are not to be trusted – see, for example, the evil wrought by one of the *musālima*, or converts from Christianity, in 'Ali Shar and Zumurrud'.

The highly unusual and touching tale of 'Sū'l and Shumūl' offers a fresh perspective on the subject of conversion. Though the story is certainly older, it was written down in the fourteenth century with view to inserting it in the *Nights*, but never achieved that canonical status. In this story love conquers all, even confessional prejudice. The

Yemenites Sū'l and Shumūl love one another, but then Shumūl is spirited away. Sū'l wanders through the Middle East in quest of her, singing of his love and searching for her in the monasteries and convents of the Levant. The monks listen to his versified plight with sympathy, but his quest is long. In 'Sū'l and Shumūl' Christianity is portrayed with sympathy and knowledge. Near the end of Sū'l's quest, in the monastery of Dār al-Ṭīn in Egypt, he actually meets a monk who used to be a Muslim but who apostasized out of love for a Christian girl.[25]

Fantasy is fantasy, but one tale which came to be included in the *Nights* and in other story collections is unusual in its circumstantial detail and (for me at least) its ring of authenticity. 'The Story of the Man of Upper Egypt' was transmitted, so the story tells us, by Shujā al-Dīn, *wālī* of Cairo during the reign of the Ayyubid sultan al-Kāmil. He had the story from the man of Upper Egypt himself. In 1184 the latter found himself blessed with an unusually good crop of flax, but since prices were low in Egypt that year he was advised to take the flax to the crusader port of Acre where prices would be better. He did so, rented a shop, and started trading and bartering away his crop. Then he began a relationship with a Frankish woman. At first this was a commercial relationship in which he was selling her flax cheaply because of her pretty face, but as her visits recurred and more flax was sold more cheaply, he fell in love with her; he then arranged with her duenna for her to come to him in return for money. When the time came, at the last moment he was seized by shame and compunction and sent her away; a second time the same happened, and then the truce between Muslims and Franks expired and town criers went round Acre announcing that the Muslim merchants had eight days to leave the city according to the provisions of the truce. Our flax trader moved on to Damascus where he started to sell the goods he had acquired in Acre, and branched out into trading in slave girls. Following Saladin's crushing of the Kingdom of Jerusalem at Ḥiṭṭīn in 1187, there were many slaves on the market in Syria, and in the course of a trade-off in slaves with the Sultan, the man from Upper Egypt was given the pick of a bunch of Frankish women. There he found the woman he had fallen in love with at Acre, and acquired her. When she recognized him, she was so stunned by this stroke of destiny that she converted to Islam. He then took her along to the kadi Bahā' al-Dīn ibn Shaddād to witness his manumission of her and their marriage. Subsequently, her family tried to ransom her, but after she had stated her own wishes before Saladin and the Frankish envoy, she was allowed to stay with her new husband. A little later, her mother used the Frankish envoy to deliver a chest containing her daughter's property. The couple found inside not only her clothes, but also the sealed bags of money that the flax trader had offered the young

woman to lure her into bed. They lived happily ever after and she became the mother of his fair faced children.[26]

More commonly Christianity is mocked in the *Nights*. The Byzantine patriarch in 'Umar al-Nu'mān mixes his excrement with the ambergris he scatters from his censer.[27] 'Alā' al-Dīn Abū al-Shamat, made the slave of a church in Genoa, is put in the toilet service of ten blind cripples who are dependents of the church.[28] When the beautiful Zayn al-Mawāṣif rests in a monastery, the monks all lust madly after her and when she goes, they have a statue of her made so that they can worship it.[29] Plainly the stories show hostility to Christians and Franks, yet equally plainly there was an underlying lack of seriousness about popular literature's portrayal of Islam's great rival. What we find is coarse mockery, not real venom. This stands out the more plainly if we compare their treatment to that of the Magians and the Jews in some of the stories in the *Nights*. The Magians (or Zoroastrians) are master villains, perverts, torturers, and cannibals.[30] The Jews in the late Cairene stories (inserted into the *Nights* perhaps as late as the eighteenth century), practice ritual murder and other atrocities.[31] The Christians on the other hand are hardly more than Indians facing the Muslim cowboys.

This unserious cowboys-and-indians approach to what Edward Gibbon called 'the World's Great Debate' reappears in the fragmentary script of the shadow play, *La'b al-Manār*, or 'Play of the Lighthouse' (of Alexandria).[32] The fragments that survive, mostly verses to accompany high points in the action, were written in the sixteenth century, but the play itself was certainly older and was probably first performed in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The great lighthouse in Alexandria, which actually fell to pieces in the course of the early fourteenth century, serves in the play as the Muslim's watchtower and storehouse of weapons for use against the Franks. In its garrison are al-Rikhīm (nicknamed the Father of Cats, a stock character in Egyptian shadow theatre)[33] and his companion, al-Ḥāziq (nicknamed Cat). A Maghribi who has been trading in Venice disguised as a monk comes to warn them that a Christian crusader fleet is on the way.[34] This fleet turns out to be composed of Cypriot, Rhodian, Templar, Hospitaller, Catalan, and Venetian ships. The Maghribi's warning was really superfluous, for eventually a bombastic Catalan ambassador arrives to declare war: 'O community of Muslims I have come to with a message and I demand an answer'.[35] Later on there is a disconnected fragment of comic business involving al-Rikhīm and al-Ḥāziq (the Laurel and Hardy of this only sometimes heroic saga) and al-Rikhīm's attempts to interpret what a Christian is saying. The first outcome of his efforts is too fragmentary and too lewd to be detailed

here. But al-Rikhīm is urged to have another go: 'Say something more to him'. So al-Rikhīm goes to the Christian and says 'Speak!'. The Christian says 'Basheilishu kanakis faliqabsu balaqis'. 'Sweet things!' cries al-Rikhīm. 'What does it mean in Arabic?' his companion wants to know. 'He says bring one-legged, one-armed monsters in lanterns.' (The so-called translation is achieved by changing the consonants in the Christian's words.) The scene continues with similar punning, misunderstandings, or wilful mistranslations on the part of al-Rikhīm.[36]

In a later scene al-Rikhīm and the captain of a Frankish ship trade insults, before the Frank tries to tempt him on the ship with the promise of woven and dyed cloth, and then with the offer of the hand of his daughter Buma. But al-Rikhīm only professes himself to be won over by the promise of lots of pork and spice wine.[37] (The shadow puppet figure of the Father of Cats conventionally features as a hideous big-bellied man with a protruding rear.) There are other interesting though usually fragmentary scenes of comedy and martial bombast, before the play ends with the defeat of the Christians and a victory parade of the weeping captives in chains. 'Look O merchants on the sons of kings! What skill they had in thieving. How much they took in the dark of the night from ships on the sea.'[38] And yet, and this is perhaps the implicit theme of the play, they have been defeated by the ordinary common people of Egypt.

The role of common people, how they pit their wits and courage against villainous Franks, is again an important theme in that well-known work, *The Sīra of Baybars*.[39] It has survived in many manuscripts from the sixteenth century onwards. It was a professional story tellers' folk epic in serial parts, an Egyptian *roman feuilleton*, various versions of which were cobbled together between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. It celebrates the exploits (at least 90 per cent fictitious) of the thirteenth-century Mamluk, who later became sultan, Baybars al-Bunduqdari. But there are many other heroes in this straggling farrago. Baybars is helped by a trusty band of Ismā'īlī Assassin cat burglars, as well as street ruffians, wrestling champions, and assorted holy men. The role of mamluks, other than Baybars, is correspondingly diminished, though historically they were of course the real defenders of Egypt and Syria from the Franks and the Mongols.

The villains include rival Mamluk emirs, corrupt Egyptian officials, street pimps and debauchees, crusader lords and other Europeans. But the master villain, medieval Islam's Fu Manchu, is the Christian who poses as Sultan Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb's Chief Kadi, Kāhin Juwān, Priest John. A Portuguese impostor, he is the evil brain who directs the crusaders in the East, the kings of Europe and even the pope against Baybars. Some of the *Sīra* is set on the *Sāḥil*, the Frankish crusader coastline. There are

Christian attacks on Jerusalem, Aleppo, and the Nile Delta. A garbled and fictitious version of Louis IX's Damietta Crusade is presented by the epic. Baybars attacks and conquers Latakia. In one scene, early on in his career, Baybars intervenes in a dispute between a Lady Fatima and the Frankish lord Sarjawil in the Safed region over the provisions of a treaty governing the partition of agricultural revenue. Malcolm Lyons, in a discussion of one of the manuscripts of the *Sīra*, has rightly pointed out how much this fictitious incident actually reflects the realities of treaties for the partition of local revenue, as concluded between the Franks and the Muslim powers in the thirteenth century.[40]

But the struggle is not restricted to the war on the *Sāḥil*. Baybars and his companions have adventures all over the Mediterranean world. The Catalan corsairs are a particular menace (and in this respect at least I think the *Sīra* reflects Egypt's problems in the early fifteenth century).[41] The Muslims go to war against Constantinople, after Kāhin Juwān fabricates a letter from the emperor Bab Mikhā'īl (Michael Palaeologus), protesting at the closure of the Holy Sepulchre. Furthermore – and here there is certainly a relationship with *The Thousand and One Nights* – there is a Genoese princess, Miriam, who converts to Islam and marries a Muslim in Egypt. Later she is drugged, kidnapped, taken back to Genoa, and locked up in the Prison of Sighs, before being rescued. Various Muslim heroes have adventures in Genoa, while Baybars and his allies are active throughout the Mediterranean world and even venture as far as England. It is unfortunate, however, that the emphasis of the *Sira* is on plot and dialogue rather than on description and local colour, so that these foreign places hardly feature as more than names in the story. Towards the end of the epic, Juwān, his impostures exposed, flees to Rome, but the Muslims pursue him there and the villain is captured and crucified.

Why do the Isma'ili Assassins, who elsewhere have not received a good press, serve the epic's hero? According to the story tellers, it is because Baybar's rise to power and his triumph over the Christians and other enemies have been predicted in a secret book that has been in the possession of the Isma'ilis for centuries, the *Kitāb al-Yūnān* or *Book of Greek*. The *Kitāb al-Yūnān* is a fictitious specimen of what was a real genre in Arabic literature, namely *malāḥim* or prophecies. *Malāḥim* literature traced its origins back to the Prophet Daniel. These prophetic treatises, usually in vulgar Arabic, concerned themselves with the Last Days and the coming of the Messiah, the Antichrist and the Mahdi, but also they commonly detailed the futures of particular dynasties and rulers.[42] The destinies of Mamluks, Ottomans, and Timur were the subject of such treatises in the late Middle Ages. More generally, *malāḥim* literature may be seen as consolation literature,

offering hope in difficult times. A popular favourite in the Mamluk period was the *Saiha al-Būm fī Hawādith al-Rūm* or *The Hoot of the Owl Concerning the Events of Byzantium or Rome* by pseudo-Ibn al-'Arabī. It seems to have been extant in several versions, as its predictions had to be repeatedly revised to take account of events as they happened. *Inter alia*, the book of prophecy offered the Muslims the assurance that the world could not end until Constantinople had passed into the hands of the Muslims.[43] Another work in the same genre, the *Shumūs al-Ghurūb* or *Suns of the Setting* predicted the fall of crusader Acre and proclaimed that this would lead to the fall of Constantinople.[44]

The themes and images of *malāhim* writings infiltrated mainstream literature. In many of the geographies of the period one finds Constantinople and Rome (and occasionally the two were confused) treated as marvellous cities of the millenium. The cities are full of fabulous treasures – among them, talismanic statues, which, drawn doubtless from an older tradition of hermetic literature, protect the great cities of Christendom but often at the same time they spell out their doom. *Malāhim* and other themes from popular literature also found their way into chronicle writing. A marginal addition to the chronicle, the *Kitāb al-Sulūk* by the fifteenth-century historian and *'alim*, al-Maqrīzī, described how, when Acre fell to the Mamluks in 1291, the triumphant conquerors found within its walls a church and in the church a sepulchre of red marble and on the sepulchre a lead tablet on which there was an inscription in *Rūmī* (Greek):

> This piece of ground will be conquered by men belonging to the community of an Arab prophet who has a *sharī'a* (law). Those who follow him will triumph and his religion will become the greatest and it will conquer the regions of Persia and all parts of Rūm. When the year 700 approaches [namely circa 1300 C.E.], his community will conquer all the lands of the Franks and destroy the churches.

The Mamluk sultan, al-Ashraf Khalīl, was very gratified to hear this news.[45]

The research of Gotz Schregle and Ulrich Haarmann dealing with literature of the Mamluk period has underlined the importance of what Haarmann has called the 'literarization' of historical writing – by which is meant both the employment in annals of styles, techniques, and language more commonly found in the literature of entertainment and also the straightforward importation of fictitious incident into chronicle narratives that are otherwise often frankly dull.[46] It may be that the growth of an audience for history among the Mamluk elite

combined with a Turkish taste for myths and wonder tales had a role here.

One example of this phenomenon will be examined below – a passage in the generally, and perhaps justly, neglected chronicle of Qirṭā'ī al-'Izzī al-Khazindārī.[47] We know nothing about this man apart from what his chronicle tells us – that he was writing sometime between 1293 and 1340 – and what his name tells us – that he was almost certainly a mamluk, and perhaps at one time in the service of 'Izz al-Din Aybak al-Mansūrī, the sultan Qalāwūn's *khazindār* or store keeper.[48] Two fragments of his *Tārīkh al-Nawādir mimmā jāra li-l-Awā'il wa-l-Awākhir* (History of entertaining stories of early and late times) exist today. A late section of it, covering the years 1229–90, survives in the Gotha collection of manuscripts. One of his declared aims was to write about people outside the lands of Islam,[49] but the Gotha manuscript is for the most part a fairly brief annals covering events in Egypt and Syria. It uses earlier historians like Ibn Wāṣil, but its chronological accuracy is below average.

Every now and again, however, Qirtā'ī reported something which cannot be found in his predecessors' works. Claude Cahen has written in two separate places about two such reports. First, when Qirtā'ī wrote about events leading up to Louis IX's expedition to Egypt, he provides us with the surprising information that while Louis and his army were moving off (and heading presumably for Aigues Mortes), the German emperor Frederick II met them on his land and tried to dissuade Louis and the French from the enterprise. Finding that he had failed, Frederick then wrote to al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb to warn the sultan of what was coming Egypt's way. Qirtā'ī quotes from the text of Frederick's letter. Cahen is dubious about the details and the story is not, I think, supported by any contemporary source, but Cahen is inclined to grant that there might be something in it.[50]

Secondly, Qirṭā'ī tells us about an incident in the reign of Baybars. A certain Arnaud of Jebail, who regularly looted Muslim lands and sent his prisoners to the Mongols, had planned to invade Egypt with the assistance of 10,000 Mongols from Hulagu. Baybars, in revenge, had him murdered and tried to arrange for the Templars to provide a getaway boat for the assassin. This Arnaud would have been assassinated in 1261 or 1265. There was no Lord of Jebail called Arnaud at this time. Cahen is doubtful, but again reports the incident for what it is worth.[51]

A third passage relating to Europe and the crusades is long, so a summary is offered here. Qirṭā'ī's chronology is vague, but refers to the section for events in the *hijrī* year 669 – that is August 1270 to August 1271.[52] In the early summer of 1271, as Qirṭā'ī accurately reported,

Baybars had sent a fleet to attack Cyprus. The expedition was a disaster and most of the crews were taken prisoner after the ships were sunk. In the same year the king of Cyprus sent some of these captives to be paraded around Europe. The kings of Europe (*al-Barr al-Ṭawīl*) were much encouraged by this, as was the pope, who is called Lakaf, which means Caliph (sic). The pope sent messages round Europe to stir up a new crusade, approaching all the kings of al-Rumania in al-Barr al-Ṭawīl, especially the Lord of Markarkatakūna (so it seems to read in the manuscript, but the vowelling is to some extent hypothetical), Messina, and Barcelona. The pope's message appealed for ships, men, and money.

Among the many in Europe who were supposed to take part in this crusade were the Bashqird, described as an accursed race and most awful people. They speak Turkish and have no kings or leaders. Among the Franks the Venetians are similar, except that they are modest and known for their wealth, whereas the Bashqirds are notoriously poor and troublesome. The Bashqirds believe that death in the Holy Land is better than life. These races we are talking about (and here I think Qirtā'ī means Europeans in general) put pepper in their drinks, because the ground they sit on is so cold. They are yellow-faced, blue-eyed, and red-haired.

There are five aspects of Muslim life that Europeans marvel at. First, they have never known a black man. When they do see one, they are afraid, believing that he is angry with them. Secondly, they marvel at the quadruped which kneels to be loaded, meaning the camel. Thirdly, they do not know of anywhere on earth where a man is bought and sold and a *ṣanja* (a cymbal?) is struck on (or beside) his head and he becomes a prince and possesses the land and the necks (*sic*) of the people. It is not possible amongst them. (This somewhat cryptic formulation refers, I believe, to the Mamluk system, where a slave may rise to become sultan.) Fourthly, they did not know that a Muslim can have four wives. This is not possible for Christians. Fifthly they are ignorant about legal depositions. Among them the magistrates (*ḥukkam*) are monks and priests. When two people are involved in a case, their respective neighbours bear witness for them. One of the European misfortunes is that they do not know about trade, buying, and selling, but only about gambling and destructive wine. This latter is important in their religion and beliefs.

Qirtā'ī has more marvels to unfold. The city of Markarkatakūna in the land of *al-Barr al-Ṭawīl* has 40,000 churches, not counting the monasteries in the environs. It has 200,000 pubs. These people do not count drinking wine or stealing as evil or sinful. Outside the city are taverns noted for evil and sin. It is difficult to locate Qirtai's

Markarkatakūna with any certainty, and it does not feature in the standard topographies of Yāqūt and al-Himyarī. However, it seems possible that one diacritic point too many has been added and one should read Markarankūna – or March of Ancona, the region standing for the town. In this period, it was governed by Charles of Anjou, but, in any case, Qirṭā'ī's Ancona is a fantasy city of sin and vice, a medieval Las Vegas.

Qirṭā'ī then proceeds to tell a tale of a crusade that never was. When Baybars heard of the crusader agitation in Europe, he became fearful that there would be attacks against him by the Franks and that the Mongols would join in from the east. He therefore sent for one of his envoys, a certain Ṣārim al-Mas'ūdī. Baybars told Ṣārim to go to the greatest of the kings of *al-Barr al-Tawīl*, the Malik al-Inkitara (King of England). This king has a brother who is also a king but of lesser importance. Ṣārim was to take with him 300 peppered wines, priceless emeralds, cotton, an elephant, and a giraffe. When Ṣārim reached England he was to salute the king and say that the sultan wished nothing from him, except to live in peace with him and be his brother. Ṣārim did as he was told, all went well and he returned from his embassy laden with equally precious gifts. The result was that when, four months later, the pope asked for the dispatch of English ships to Acre, the king refused, and, learning this, the other kings, lost heart. Then bad weather in the Mediterranean set in, the pope died that year and the crusade never materialized.

Some comments on Qirtā'ī's information are called for. There is a surprising amount about the Bashqirds in orthodox medieval Arab geographies. The Bashqirds were, strictly, a Turkish people who had settled in Hungary, but sometimes Bashqird was a name which was applied to all Hungarians, including Magyars. In various sources the Bashqirds are described as Muslims, Christians, or pagans, but no account of them in Arabic seems to tally with that of Qirtā'ī.[53] Their appearance in the context of a projected crusade and their readiness to die in the Holy Land perhaps reflects the impression made by the Hungarians who arrived with King Andrew of Hungary in Palestine during the Fifth Crusade.

Turning to the crusade that never was, if Qirṭā'ī's chronology is to be taken seriously, then the embassy to England would have been in the reign of Henry III. Henry did have a brother who was a king, Richard of Cornwall. But the year Qirṭā'ī is writing about in fact overlaps with the year in which Louis IX went on crusade to Tunis, while Edward of England, Henry's son, arrived in Acre to do some inconclusive crusading.[54] Henry did acquire an elephant, but it was at the beginning of the reign, not near its end.[55] There is no record in English sources of a

Mamluk embassy to England in the 1270s or at any other time. There was a Mamluk emir called Ṣārim al-Dīn al-Mas'ūdī, but he had died in a fracas in the Hall of Justice some years earlier.[56] What should we conclude from Qirṭā'ī's excursus into European affairs? Surely, it is that this amateur historian, whether panicking at his ignorance or faintly bored, settled down to tell lies at this point in his chronicle. The fact that the pages he devoted to the embassy to England are demonstrably nonsensical should encourage us to look with a colder eye on the other original snippets of information he offers elsewhere.

In conclusion, it is clear that, while popular literature devoted more space to Europe and the Europeans than one finds in works written by members of the clerical elite, nevertheless popular literature was not notably better informed about Christendom. The Frank and Greek tended to feature in popular fiction only as stereotyped plot movers. When popular literature touched on the themes of Holy War, it was not seriously engaging in polemic. Perhaps, rather, this literature gave wistful expression to the desire of the common people to take part in a struggle for the Faith, a struggle that had become in practice almost a monopoly of the Turkish and Kurdish elite. Even so, this sort of popular literary material makes a welcome change from the bombastic panegyrics of court chroniclers and the monocular vision of the clerical establishment.

NOTES

1. On mainstream medieval Arab literature dealing with Europe, see B. Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (London, 1982).
2. On these commercial communities, see E. Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), *passim*.
3. A. von Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff*, trans. and ed. M. Letts (London, 1946), p.162.
4. F. Fabri, *Le Voyage en Egypte de Félix Fabri, 1483*, trans. J. Masson (Paris, 1975), 3 vols, pp.413–14, 431–5, 913–15; c.f. H.F.M. Prescott *Once to Sinai: The Further Pilgrimage of Friar Felix Fabri* (London, 1957), pp.131–2.
5. Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery*, p.128.
6. W. Popper, *Egypt and Syria Under the Circassian Sultans 1382–1486 A.D.: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghri Birdi's Chronicles of Egypt* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955), Pt. 2, pp.13–14.
7. 'Umar ibn al-Wardī, *Kharīṭat al-Ajā'ib wa Farīdat al- Gharā'ib* (Cairo, 1939), pp.79–80.
8. Muhammad ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, trans. and ed. H.A.R. Gibb, Vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1959), pp.499–513; cf. R.E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveller of the Fourteenth Century* (London, 1986), pp.170–72; M. Izzedin, 'Ibn Battouta et la topographie byzantine', in *Actes VI Congrès international d'études byzantines*, Vol. 2 (1951), pp.191–6.
9. M. Izzedin, 'Quelques voyageurs musulmans à Constantinople au Moyen Age', *Orient*, 9 (1965), 92; E. Quatremère, 'Notice de l'ouvrage qui a pour titre Mesalek Alabsar fi Memalek Alamsar', *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, 13 (1838), 579–80; M. Amari, 'Al-'Umari, Condizioni degli stati Cristiani

dell'Occidente secondo una relazione di Domenichino Doria da Genova', *Atti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, 11 (1883), 67–103, especially 74–5.

10. Ibn al-Wardī, *Kharīdat*, p.79.
11. H. Müller, *Die Kunst des Sklavenkaufs nach arabischen, persischen und türkischen Ratgebern vom 10. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg, 1980), p.104.
12. Müller, *Kunst des Sklavenkaufs*, pp.129–30.
13. Ibid., p.132.
14. On Arabic popular romances and epics, see R. Paret, *Die Geschichtes des Islams im Spiegel der Arabischen Volksliteratur* (Tübingen, 1927); M. Canard, 'Delhemma. Epopée arabe des guerres arabo-byzantines', *Byzantion*, 10 (1935), 283–300; H. Pérès, 'Le Roman dans la littérature arabe des origines à la fin du Moyen Age' *Annales de l'Institut des Etudes Orientales*, 16 (1958), 1–40; F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, 1962), pp.164–7; U. Steinbach, *Dhāt al-Himma. Kulturgeschichteliche Untersuchungen zu einem arabischen Volksroman* (Wiesbaden, 1972); G. Canova, 'Gli Studi sull'epica popolare Araba', *Oriente Moderno*, 57 (1977), 211–26; P. Heath, 'A Critical Review of Modern Scholarship on Sirat 'Antar ibn Shaddad and the Popular Sira', *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 15 (1984), 19–44; B. Connelly, *The Arab Folk Epic and Identity* (Berkeley–Los Angeles–London, 1986).
15. G.E. von Grunebaum, 'Greek Form Elements in the Arabian Nights', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 62 (1942), 277–92.
16. B.E. Perry, *The Origin of the Book of Sindbad* (Berlin, 1960).
17. A. Shboul, *Al-Mas'ūdī and His World* (London, 1979), pp.124, 148–9.
18. Muḥammad ibn al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadīm*, trans. B. Dodge (Columbia, 1970), Vol. 2, pp.713–14. Bayard Dodge's translation is to be preferred to G. Flugel's edition of the Arabic text of the *Fihrist*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1871), since the latter was based on an inferior manuscript.
19. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Vol. 2, p.718.
20. R. Goossens, 'Recherches récentes sur l'épopée Byzantine', *Antiquité classique*, 2 (1933), 461–2.
21. *The Thousand Nights and a Night*, trans. R.F. Burton (Benares and Stoke Newington, 1885), Vol. 2, pp.77–283; Vol. 3, pp.48–114; c.f. on the saga of 'Umar, R. Paret, *Der Ritter-Roman von Umar an-Numan und seine Stellung zur Sammlung von 1001 Nacht* (Tübingen, 1927); R. Goossens, 'Autour de Digenis Akritas. La "Geste d'Omar" dans les mille et une nuits', *Byzantion*, 7 (1932), 303–16; cf. N. Christides, 'An Arabo- Byzantine Novel "'Umar B. al-Nu'man" compared with Digenis Akritas', *Byzantion*, 22 (1962), 549–604.
22. *The Thousand Nights and a Night*, Vol. 2, pp.223–4.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., Vol. 4, pp.29–44; 187–228; Vol. 8, pp.264–397 and Vol. 9, pp.1–18.
25. F.C. Seybold (ed.), *Geschichte von Sul und Schumul, Unbekannte Erzählungen aus Tausend und Einer Nacht* (Leipzig, 1902).
26. *The Thousand Nights and a Night*, Vol. 9, pp.19–24; Varsy, 'Anecdote des Croisades', *Journal Asiatique*, 4th ser., 16 (1850), 75–92. Note that Varsy's version is fuller and provides a number of circumstantial details that are not in the *Nights* version. Although Varsy did not identify his source, it was probably a manuscript of al-Ghuzūlī's *Maṭālī al Budūr fi Manāzil al-Surūr*, a fifteenth-century *belles lettres* compilation which includes the same story.
27. *The Thousand Nights and a Night*, Vol. 2, pp.222–3.
28. Ibid., Vol. 4, p.87.
29. Ibid., Vol. 8, p.259.
30. See in particular the stories of 'Qamar al-Zaman', 'The Fourth Voyage of Sinbad' and 'Hasan of Bassorah' in ibid., Vol. 3, pp.212–348; Vol. 6, pp.34–47; Vol. 8, pp.7–145.
31. See in particular the stories of 'The Three Princes of China' and 'The Merchant's Daughter and the Prince of al-Irak', in *Supplemental Nights to the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (Burton Club edn., n.d.), Vol. 6, pp.213–28, 401–37.

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33. J. Landau, *Studies in the Arab Theatre and Cinema* (Philadelphia, 1958), p.24; C.E. Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld: The Banu Sasan in Arabic Society and Literature* (Leiden, 1976), p.129 and n.109.
34. Kahle, *Der Leuchtturm*, pp.25–8.
35. Ibid., p.31.
36. Ibid., p.36.
37. Ibid., pp.46–8.
38. Ibid., p.67.
39. *Sīrat al-Ẓāhir Baybars*, 48 parts (Cairo, 1908–9). On its contents, see H. Wangelin, *Das arabische Volksbuch vom König Azzahir Baibars* (Stuttgart, 1936); W. Fischer, 'Die Nachwirkung der Kreuzzüge in der arabischen Volksliteratur', in W. Fischer and J. Schneider (eds.), *Das Heilige Land im Mittelalter; Begegungsraum zwischen Orient und Okzident*, (Neustadt an der Aisch, 1982), pp.151–4.
40. M.C. Lyons, 'The Sirat Baybars', in *Orientalia Hispanica*, 1 (Leiden, 1974), 490.
41. On Catalan piracy, see P.H. Dopp, 'Un corsaire du quinzième siècle, Pedro de Laranda', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University*, 2 (1949), 7–28.
42. On *malāḥim* see T. Fahd, *La Divination Arabe* (Leiden, 1966), pp.224–7; *Encyclopedia of Islam* (2nd edn.), s.v. *Malāḥim, Djafr, Mahdī*; A. Abel, 'Un Hadit sur la prise de Rome dans la tradition eschatologique de l'Islam', *Arabica*, 5 (1955), 1–14; id., 'Changements politiques et littérature eschatologique dans le monde musulman', *Studia Islamica*, 2 (1954), 23–43.
43. Abel, 'Un Hadit', 6–8; id., 'Changements politiques', 40.
44. Abel, 'Un Hadit', 8–12.
45. Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, ed. M.M. Ziyada (Cairo, 1956–58), Vol. 1, Pt. 3, p.765n.
46. G. Schregle, *Die Sultanin von Ägypten, Sagarat ad-Durr in der arabischen Geschichtsschreibung und Literatur* (Wiesbaden, 1961); U. Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970).
47. Qirtā'ī al-'Izzī al-Khazindārī, *Tārīkh al-Nawādir mimmā li-l-awā'il wa-l-awākhir*), Gotha MS.1655 (School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, microfilm 5348); cf. C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord* (Paris, 1940), p.79; G. Levi della Vida, 'L'Invasione dei Tatari' *Orientalia*, 4 (1935), 355–8.
48. There is nothing in Ibn Hajar's obituary of Qaratāy al-Ashar, Mamluk governor of Tripoli, to suggest that he should be identified with the historian; see Aḥmad ibn Hajar, *Al-Durar al-Kāmina* (Hyderabad, 1929–32), Vol. 3, p.248.
49. W. Ahlwardt, *Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1897), p.54, MS. No. 9446.
50. C. Cahen, 'Saint Louis et l'Islam', *Journal Asiatique*, 258 (1970), 9–12.
51. C. Cahen, 'La Chronique de Kirtay et les Francs de Syrie', *Journal Asiatique*, 229 (1937), 140–45.
52. Qirṭā'ī, *Tārīkh al-Nawādir*, fols. 96b–99a.
53. On the Bashqirds see *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. s.v. *Bashdjirt*; M. Canard, 'Ibn Fodlan chez les Bulgares', *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales*, 16 (1958), 84–5; *Abu Hamid al-Grenadino y su relación de viaje por terras eurasiáticas*, ed. and trans. C.E. Dubler (Madrid, 1953), pp.27, 31–2.
54. S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1955), pp.332–7.
55. Matthew Paris, *Matthew Paris' English History*, trans. J.A. Giles, Vol. 3 (London, 1854), p.115.
56. Muhyī al-dīn ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, *Al-Rawd al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, ed. A. Khowaiter (Riyad, 1976), pp.249–50.

VII

How Many Miles to Babylon? The *Devise des Chemins de Babiloine* Redated*

In 1882 Count Riant published a Hospitaller document in a collection entitled *Itinéraires à Jérusalem et descriptions de la Terre Sainte, rédigés en Français aux xie, xiie & xiiie siècles*. This document, *La Devise des Chemins de Babiloine*, detailed the strengths of Mamluk armies in Egypt and Syria and gave mileages of the various routes between Cairo and the Delta ports.[1] Evidently it had been prepared as an intelligence report in preparation for some future and hypothetical crusade to be launched against Mamluk Cairo. Riant, who found the memorandum in the Vatican archives, dated it fairly precisely to between 1289 and 1291. Riant had noticed that Tripoli was listed in the *Devise* as a centre of Mamluk government, whereas Acre was not, and he deduced that the document therefore must have been drafted after Qalawun's army had taken Tripoli but before Acre had yet fallen to Qalawun's son, al-Ashraf Khalil.

Two years after Riant's publication of the document, Charles Schefer produced a study of it in *Archives de l'Orient latin*.[2] In this study scholarship and logic took a step backwards, for Schefer dated the document to the reign of the Sultan al-Zahir Baybars – that is, as he put it, sometime between the fall of Safed (1266) and the fall of Acre. (Schefer seems not have noticed that Baybars was dead by 1277, quite some years before the capture of Tripoli and Acre.) Subsequently, the document has attracted little attention and on those occasions when it is referred to in the modern literature on the crusades, Riant's dating is taken for granted. Thus the *Devise* is customarily referred to as if it were an

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[1] 'La Devise des Chemins de Babiloine', ed. P. Riant, in *Itinéraires à Jérusalem et descriptions de la Terre Sainte, rédigés en Français aux xie, xiie & xiiie siécles*, ed. H. Michelant and G. Raynaud (Geneva, 1882), pp. xxxi–xxxii, 239–52.

[2] C. Schefer, 'Etude sur La Devise des Chemins de Babiloine', *AOL*, **2** 1884, pp. 89–101.

unusual precursor of the *De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae* genre of literature (that is, similar to, but earlier than, material produced by such writers as Fidenzio of Padua, Marino Sanudo, Hethoum of Armenia, William Adam and Ramon Lull).[3]

However, Riant's basis for dating the memorandum is groundless. While Tripoli did become a Mamluk province with its own *na'ib*, or governor, this provincial governorship was not set up immediately in 1289. The Christian city had been destroyed and the Muslim one was built on a new site. It is hard to be dogmatic about this but, as far as I can tell, the first Mamluk officer to be described as the *Na'ib* of Tripoli was 'Izz al-Din Aybak al-Mansuri who took charge of the city in 692/1292–93.[4] More significantly, Acre, when it fell to the Mamluks, was not elevated to the dignity of an independent *niyaba* or province, and it never became one. It never even rated a lowly *wali*, or lesser governor.[5] According to Ludolph of Suchem, who visited the place some forty years after the Mamluks' capture of Acre, the area was inhabited by peasants and patrolled by about sixty Saracen mercenaries, who supplemented whatever wages they received by selling caged birds.[6] Throughout the remaining two centuries or so of Mamluk history, Acre was usually classified as a district in the *niyaba* of Gaza. Thus Riant's *termini post* and *ante quem* are not what they seem.

So, if the *Devise* was not necessarily drafted somewhere between 1289 and 1291, is it possible to determine when it was drawn up? And on what sources did its author, or authors, draw? It is time now to examine the internal evidence and, to do this, it will be useful to quote the first part of the document in full.

> Here begins a treatise which was recently made overseas [*oultre la mer*], commissioned by the Master and the Convent of the Hospital, as well as of other worthy men, who have been overseas and who know the power of the Sultan and the Saracens and it has been done to discover how many men-at-arms the Sultan may have from all the power of the Saracens and in which places and within which days he can assemble them.
>
> By this document it may be possible to discover and know the power of the wicked Saracens who currently rule over the kingdom of Babylon [Egypt].
>
> First, the Sultan provides from his own household 1,000 cavalry, heavy and light. Then there are twenty-four great emirs, 'chieftains of the host' each of whom can field an hundred cavalry. Then there are eighty emirs of which some bring with them sixty cavalry, some fifty and some forty, and the sum total of this category amounts to 4,000 cavalry. Then there are thirty emirs, each of whom is followed

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[3] On this sort of literature and its context see N. Housley, *The Later Crusades from Lyons to Alcazar 1274–1580* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 22–48.

[4] Al-Maqrizi, Ahmad ibn 'Ali, *Kitab al-Suluk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Muluk*, ed. M.M. Ziada, 1, pt. 3 (Cairo, 1956), p. 272.

[5] M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie á l'Epoque des Mamelouks d'après les Auteurs Arabes* (Paris, 1923), p. 121.

[6] *Ludolph von Suchem's Description of the Holy Land*, trans. A. Stewart, *PPTS*, **12** (London, 1895), p. 61.

by ten horsemen. Then there are seventy elmeccadem [in Arabic, *al-muqaddimun*] and each *muqaddam* brings with him forty horsemen and they are called the 'la Bahrye' [i.e. the Bahris] who are all always around the tent of the Sultan.

Then there are other *muqaddams* to the number of eighty, each of whom brings with him forty horsemen. And you should know that all the emirs can certainly produce from their mesnies approximately a further 1,000 cavalry and more. The sum total for Babylon is 14,700. And all the men-at-arms which are listed above are divided among the twenty-four chieftains also listed above. And that is the strength of Babylon.

The power of Syria: firstly at Gaza 700 cavalry, then at Safed 900 cavalry, at Damascus 4,000 cavalry, at Homs 300 cavalry, at Hama 1,000 cavalry, at Aleppo 2,000 cavalry, at Tripoli 1,000 cavalry. The sum for Syria is 9,900. The sum total of the power of the Sultan in Babylon and Syria is 24,600 men, of which at least 15,000 are so poor that they can hardly maintain their horses.[7]

The second and longer part of the document, which will not be cited in detail here, gives precise routes and distances in leagues from Gaza to Cairo, from Damietta to Cairo, a variety of routes from Rosetta to Cairo and other places, a route from Degua to Cairo and a route from Alexandria to Cairo. Garrison figures are given for both al-Fua and Alexandria. Alexandria, defended by ninety horsemen and about a hundred bedouin, must have seemed a tempting prospect for any crusade planner. The *Devise* ends abruptly with a couple of lines describing the Delta province of al-Gharbiyya.

The first thing which stands out is that the *Devise* in all its surviving versions appears to be incomplete, for in none of the three surviving manuscripts is any information given about the times and places of assembly of the Mamluk army (although this was promised at the beginning of the document). Secondly, its disparaging view of the quality of Mamluk soldiery matches that of other western observers of the Mamluk army. However, unlike other western reports on Mamluk Egypt and Syria, the *Devise* seems to have been produced by someone with objective inside knowledge of how the Mamluk system worked – from the sultan down to the lowest ranks of the *halqa*. As a report on the Mamluk system and the strength of the Mamluk army, it is in a different category from what was written by, say, William Adam in the 1320s, who airily reckoned that the Sultan had more than 40,000 mamluks, or Henry II of Cyprus who guessed that Egypt in 1311 had 60,000 horsemen of which 20,000 were good, 20,000 were mediocre and 20,000 were very poor.[8] The above are evidently subjective and unsystematically presented opinions. More soberly, Hethoum of Armenia, in *Flor des Estoires* (1307), reported that the mounted strength of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad came to about 20,000 of which most were not of good quality.[9] (Although Hethoum 's figure for Egypt is higher than that of the *Devise*,

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[7] 'Devise', pp. 239–41.

[8] Guillaume Adam, 'De Modo Sarracenos Extirpandi', ed. C. Kohler, in *RHC DArm*, **2**, p. 524; A.S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), p. 60.

[9] Hayton d'Arménie, 'Flor des Estoires', in *RHC DArm*, **2**, pp. 222–4.

he gives only 5,000 cavalry for Syria, as against the *Devise's* 9,900.) In the *Devise* the twenty-four chieftains of the host neatly match what we know to have been the normal complement of Emirs of One Hundred and *Muqaddams* of One Thousand. At the time of the Nasiri *Rawk* (a cadastral survey made for military purposes) in 1315, there were exactly twenty-four of these grand officers.[10] Similarly, all the way along the line the author(s) have a sure knowledge of how the Mamluk army was compartmentalized between royal manluks, emirs' mamluks and *halqa* troops.

To be sure, it is unfortunate that numbers of troops offered by the Hospitaller document cannot be matched by any given in the Arab sources of the period. Baybars al-Mansuri, an emir who served under Qalawun and who certainly was in a position to know, says that by the end of Qalawun's reign (1290) the sultan had over 6,000 mamluks. According to the *Khitat* (a fifteenth-century source), Qalawun had 7,000 mamluks and his son and successor, al-Ashraf Khalil, had 12,000. At the time of the Nasiri *Rawk* of 1315, when accurate figures were made available, the army of Egypt alone numbered 24,000 horsemen, while the Sultan could field 2,000 mamluks from his own household.[11] In both these cases the figures are approaching double those offered by the *Devise*. On the other hand, in 1313, according to the sultan's diploma issued to the Haman prince Abu'l-Fida, the army of Hama amounted to 500, as against the 1,000 offered by the *Devise*.[12]

All this is inconclusive. Turning then to the provinces listed, the *Devise* breaks down the army estimates for Syria into seven regions which actually correspond to the component *niyabat* or provincial governorships. The *Devise*'s list of Syrian provincial capitals agrees with that provided by the geographer al-Dimashqi (who wrote between 1323 and 1327) with one exception.[13] The province of Kerak does not feature among the *Devise*'s list of provincial capitals. This might suggest that the report was compiled at a time when this *niyaba* was in abeyance. In 1293 the town was severely damaged by an earthquake and most of the damage was not repaired until 1309. In the years 1297–99 Kerak served as a place of exile for the once and future sultan al-Nasir Muhammad.[14] In 1309

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[10] R. Amitai, 'The Remaking of the Military Elite of Mamluk Egypt by al-Nasir Muhammad b. Qalawun', *Studia Islamica*, **72** (1990), p. 148; cf. D. Ayalon, 'Studies in the Structure of the Mamluk Army, III', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, **16** (1954), pp. 70–71.

[11] D. Ayalon, 'Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army I', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, **15** (1953), pp. 222–4; idem, 'Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army III', pp. 70–71.

[12] Abu'l-Fida', *The Memoirs of a Syrian Prince, Abu'l-Fida', Sultan of Hamah (672–732/1273–1331)*, trans. P.M. Holt (Wiesbaden, 1983), p. 65.

[13] Al-Dimashqi, *Manuel de la Cosmographie du Moyen Age, traduit de l'Arabe "Nokhbet ed-Dahr fi Adjaib-il-Birr wal-Bahr*, trans. A.F. Mehren (Amsterdam, 1874), p. 294; cf. N.A. Ziadeh, *Urban Life in Syria under the Early Mamluks* (Beirut, 1953), pp. 11–14.

[14] Al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-Suluk*, **1**, 3, p. 783; W. Müller-Wiener, *Castles of the Crusades* (London, 1966), p. 48.

when al-Nasir Muhammad passed through Kerak on his way to Hejaz there was no *na'ib* there to greet him, but only a humble 'castellan'.[15] A few months later Kerak became al-Nasir Muhammad's base of operations against Baybars II. It seems likely that from 1293 until 1310 at least the area had no *na'ib*.

It is unlikely that the *Devise* could have been written later than the 1340s for its author(s) imply that Homs was a *niyaba*. But, by the time al-ʿUmari wrote his chancery manual, the *Masalik al-Absar*, in the mid-to late 1340s, Homs had ceased to be a *niyaba* and was merely a subdistrict in the province of Damascus.[16] Homs seems to have survived as a *niyaba* until at least the 1320s, for al-Dimashqi devoted a section to it in his geography.[17] (Al-ʿUmari also treats Gaza as a subdistrict of Damascus,[18] but this is less significant, for the *niyaba* of Gaza flickered in and out of existence throughout the Mamluk period.[19] During the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, Sanjar al-Jawli was its *na'ib*.)[20]

It may be more significant that Hama is implicitly treated as if it were a province of the Mamluk sultanate. For most of the thirteenth century Hama was a principality (*mamlaka*) ruled by Ayyubid princes. When the Ayyubid prince al-Muzaffar died in August 1299 the principality was annexed and became just one of the provinces of Mamluk Syria. However, in 1310 when al-Nasir Muhammad became sultan in Egypt for the third time, he resurrected the principality and awarded it to his friend and supporter Abu'l-Fida'.[21]

When it comes to discussing routes through the Delta to Cairo, the place-names and mileages offered are eerily precise and comprehensive. When the *Devise* estimates that there are about 500 towns and villages in the Gharbiyya province of the Delta, it comes close to anticipating the figure of 476 given in the 1376 *rawk*.[22] And, as Schefer noted, the first Delta route listed follows the *barid* or mamluk courier route precisely, as that is described in Mamluk chancery manuals – [23] just as the formalized and confident setting out of the army estimates makes one think of similar expositions in works by al-ʿUmari, al-Qalqashandi and others.[24] In short, while I have no definite evidence and while I cannot as yet point to the source in question, I believe that the *Devise*

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[15] Abu'l-Fida', *Memoirs*, pp. 27, 32–3, 47–51.

[16] Al-'Umari, Ibn Fadl Allah, *Masalik al-Amsar fi-Mamalik al- Amsar: Mamalik Misr wa Sham wa'l-Hijaz, wa'l-Yaman*, ed. A.F. Sayyid (Cairo, 1985), pp. 124–5.

[17] Al-Dimashqi, *Manuel*, p. 273.

[18] Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, pp. 142–3.

[19] Ziadeh, *Urban Life*, p. 12.

[20] G. Wiet, 'Les Biographies du Manhal Safi', *Memoires de l'Institut d'Egypte*, **19** (Cairo, 1932), no. 1102, p.157 and the references provided there.

[21] Abu'l-Fida', *Memoirs*, pp. 34, 53.

[22] 'Devise', p. 252; Schefer, 'Etude', p. 101.

[23] 'Devise', pp. 241–3; Schefer, 'Etude', p. 94.

[24] On chancery manuals in the Mamluk period, see Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie*; R. Hartmann, 'Politische Geographie des Mamlukenreiches, Kapitel 5 und 6 des Staatshandbuchs Ibn Fadlallah al-'Omari's', *Zeitschrift für Deutsches Morgenlandische Gesellschaft*, **70** (1916), pp. 1–40; W. Björkman, *Beitrage zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei im islamischen Ägypten* (Hamburg, 1928).

is based on a partial translation of an early Mamluk administrative manual. As to the document's date, the low figures given for both for sultan's mamluks and for the Mamluk army as a whole, indicate a time of weakness. The failure to mention Kerak as a province could suggest (though it certainly does not prove) that the *Devise* drew upon data amassed during the brief reign of the Sultan Lajin (1297–99). Indeed, some of its systematic and detailed information may have been drawn from the data amassed by the Husami *Rawk* of 1298, which was commissioned by the Sultan Lajin.[25] The inclusion of Hama as one of the places furnishing troops might suggest a date between 1299 and 1310.

The Bibliothèque Nationale and Sainte Geneviève manuscripts of the *Devise* have it bound in with another Hospitaller memorandum which argued for a *passage particulier*.[26] This document was written in French but with a Latin heading *Incipit tractus dudum habitus ultra mare per magistrum et conventum Hospitalis et per alios probos viros qui diu steterunt ultra mare ...*[27] (The similarity of these lines to the opening lines of the *Devise* is particularly noteworthy.) The *passage particulier* memorandum (which has been published and commented on by Benjamin Kedar and Sylvia Schein) argues against launching a major crusade in the near future and instead puts forward proposals for a *passage particulier* – that is for smaller forces to be sent out to the East to assist in coastal raids and the enforcement of a naval blockade against the Mamluk lands. However, the men who drafted the document under the direction of the Hospitaller Grand Master, Fulk of Villaret, did envisage a landing in Egypt and an advance against Cairo, when and if the Mongols from Oljeitu's Ilkhanate invaded Syria. Then Egypt would be denuded of its *mamluk* soldiery and Cairo could easily be taken and sacked.

> *Item, et se les Tartars veignent, si comme nous aveous, il convient que tout l'ost de Babiloine vait au Sam encontre eaus et nen laissent en tout l'Egypt nule gent a cheval. Pourquoi ceste gent porront monter oveuc lour galees par le flum et par terre jusques au Caire sans nul peril ...*[28]

The Hospitaller proposal for a *passage particulier* was drafted in the East for the Grand Master before he travelled to the West to confer with the pope and others. Schein and Kedar have successfully narrowed the dates for the drawing up of this document to between September 1306 and the summer of 1307. It

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[25] On the Husami *Rawk*, see H. Halm, *Ägypten nach den mamlukischen Lehens-registern. I. Oberägypten und das Fayyum* (Wiesbaden, 1979), pp. 17–23; P.M. Holt, 'The Sultanate of Lajin (696–98/1286–89)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 36, (1973), pp. 527–9; R. Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages; The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (Beckenham, 1986), pp. 92–4.

[26] On this document see B.Z. Kedar and S. Schein, 'Un projet de "passage particulier" proposé par l'ordre de l'Hôpital 1306–7', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, 137 (1979), pp. 1211–26; cf. Housley, *Later Crusades*, pp. 27, 208, 214–15; A. Forey, *The Military Orders. From the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries* (London, 1992), pp. 96, 128, 222.

[27] Kedar and Schein, 'Un projet', pp. 211–12.

[28] Kedar and Schein, 'Un projet', p. 226.

seems most likely that the *Devise* was drawn up at exactly the same time as the document advocating a *passage particulier*. The *Devise* was then a supporting document which addressed itself to providing background information that would be needed if the Hospitallers and other crusaders were to take advantage of future hostilities between the Mongols and the Mamluks.

The *Devise* is a document of unique importance for the study of the structure and strength of the Mamluk army, but it is also of considerable importance for the light it sheds on Hospitaller policies after the fall of Acre. In the first decade of the fourteenth century the Order was, of course, primarily concerned with establishing its position on the island of Rhodes. It also had extensive interests on the island of Cyprus and in the kingdom of Cilician Armenia. In general, it was opposed to launching a major seaborne crusade. However, as both the documents it commissioned in 1306 or 1307 suggest, the Hospitallers did not entirely rule out a crusade against Egypt in the near future. In certain circumstances they were prepared to envisage a landing on the Nile Delta, and they researched the prospects for its success with great thoroughness.

VIII

Toynbee and Ibn Khaldun

'Where the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles,
Miles and miles
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half-asleep
Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or stop
As they crop –
Was the site once of a city great and gay,
(So they say)
Of our country's very capital, its prince
Ages since
Held his court in, gathered, councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

Robert Browning, 'Love among the Ruins'[1]

In the years before the First World War the Orient Express used to run a daily train de luxe between London and Vienna. From Vienna there were trains every Monday and Thursday (first class only) to Constantinople. The journey took 75 hours and cost £22 and 11 shillings. In those palmy days the train travelled from empire to empire and British travellers customarily travelled without a passport. By 1921 everything had changed. British passports came in with the Defence of the Realm Act of 1915 and papers were frequently demanded on the route to Istanbul. The Orient Express passed through nation states with uncertain futures towards a Turkey which was fighting to become a nation. It was on the Orient Express, on the line between Nish and Adrianople in September 1921, that Arnold Toynbee, in a moment of creative vision, first sketched the plan of his massive *A Study of History*, the writing of which was to occupy him for the next 40 years.[2]

Arnold Toynbee was born in 1889 and educated at Winchester and Balliol. (As an undergraduate Toynbee became friendly with the Arabist D.S. Margoliouth. The latter told Toynbee that he made a custom of reading the Quran in Arabic once a year. This commanded Toynbee's admiration 'for the Quran is appreciably longer than the Bible'. This reminiscence suggests that Toynbee never actually looked at the *Quran*, for it is in fact shorter than the New Testament.)[3] During the First World War Toynbee

worked among other things on the Blue Book on the Armenian massacres and deportations in the Ottoman empire, later published commercially as *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*. As a member of the Middle East section he attended the Paris Peace Conference of 1918–19 (as did T.E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell). In the years immediately after the Great War, he interested himself in the Greco-Turkish question. From 1915 onwards he began the study of Turkish with Ali Reza Bey at the School of Oriental Studies, London University, and in the years 1919–24 he studied Arabic with Hamilton Gibb and Thomas Arnold (though he seems never to have acquired a comfortable reading knowledge in that language).[4] In 1919 he was appointed to the Koraes Chair in Greek at King's College, London. However, the uproar created by the publication of *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey* forced his resignation in 1923. From 1926 to 1955 he was director of studies at Chatham House. He died in 1975.[5]

In 1933 the first three volumes of his *magnum opus, A Study of History*, appeared. Volumes four to six were published in 1939 (and, given the year, these volumes were naturally much concerned with the nature of militarism). Volumes seven to ten were published in 1954 and in these volumes religious issues assumed a new prominence. Finally in 1961, he published *Reconsiderations*, a volume in which he attempted to take account of criticisms levelled at the earlier volumes. In 1921, when Toynbee first had his premonitory vision of *A Study of History*, there was still formally an Ottoman Caliphate (it was abolished in 1924). Turkey's frontiers were a matter of dispute and there was bloody fighting in Anatolia. Egyptians in Alexandria were rioting against British rule, while Syria was reluctantly submitting to French control. In general, Britain and France seemed to be consolidating their hold over the Near East and North Africa. By the time Toynbee had finished with his grand historical work, most of the Middle East and North Africa had secured its independence from colonial rule, though a bitter anti-colonialist war in Algeria still continued.

As Director of Studies at Chatham House Toynbee produced the *Survey of International Affairs* (annually 1925–46) on current issues, including, among much else, reports on the Palestine question.[6] Toynbee's preoccupation with current issues informed and shaped his *A Study of History*. To take two examples among many, both the early success of Abd al-Krim's revolt in Morocco in the late 1920s and the Waziri troubles on the North-West Frontier of British India impressed upon Toynbee the ability of barbarians to imitate the techniques of imperial powers, as well as their ability to strain the defences of imperial powers out of all proportion to the barbarians' own numbers and resources.[7] Toynbee wrote in an age of emergent nations and nationalisms. In his eyes, nations were a late development and an undesirable one. He hoped that the nation state system was only the prelude

to the establishment of a global civilization. However, his anti-nationalism was not without ambiguities. For example, he admired Atatürk. He also promoted the cause of Arab nationalism against imperialism and Zionism. He always inclined to support the emergent Third World nations in their struggles against the British and French.

Emergent nations, national boundaries, the politics of the nation state were the stuff of the *International Yearbooks* produced at Chatham House under his direction. However, they were not the subject of *A Study of History.* Civilizations were. Toynbee argued that civilizations were the smallest intelligible units of historical investigation. *A Study of History* was intended, among other things, to be an extended polemic against the conventional partitions of territories and periods employed in twentieth-century historiography. It was also a way to describe the world's past in a way which was not centred on Europe and 'The Triumph of the West'. As Toynbee put it, 'Being an historian means trying to jump clear of the particular time and place at which one happened to have been born and brought up. It means trying to look at History from some standpoint that is outside one's own, and that is more central and therefore more objective than one's own is likely to be.'[8] According to Toynbee, not only were civilizations the smallest intelligible unit of investigation, they were additionally defined by the fact that they went through processes peculiar to civilizations, processes which he went on to sketch out.

Toynbee's notion of civilization can be visualized (perhaps fancifully and rather unsympathetically) as an array of automata, which have been set in motion at various times, but which independently go through what are broadly the same motions. Creative minorities drive the civilizations, guiding the arms in a characteristic see-saw motion of challenge and response and, at the same time, spraying out threads of affiliation and apparentation to neighbouring civilizations. But, as creative minorities decay into dominant minorities, the machines run down and their movements become increasingly circumscribed. A civilization whose engine has run down restructures itself as a universal state. Thereafter a fixed and doomed rhythm sets in – rout, rhythm – rout, rhythm – rout, rhythm. The focus of historical interest moves away from what had been the central engine. Now one focuses instead on the internal proletariat as well as on the external proletariat (which was Toynbee's term for the barbarian horde on the frontier). However, neither of these forces, whether engaged in frustrating the impulses of the central battery or in creatively imitating it, can do anything to arrest the final collapse. As the automata fall apart, 'fossil' and 'diaspora' cultures fall off and roll away. It may be that from the smoke of the disintegrating machinery, the forms of a nascent higher religion are discernible.

At every stage there have been subsidiary mechanisms clicking and whirring, coils and levers and breaks following the laws of etherealization, of compensation, of diminishing returns, climatic screws loosening and tightening, racial groups spinning on topographic roundabouts, ghost evocations of lost empires and caliphates rising like steam from the machinery and cultures pseudomorphically pouring into new cultural moulds. And above the din of whirring and clicking one may hear if one strains the great regular boom of Yin and Yang filling the workshop of History where these engines are being tested by their creator, God.

Toynbee's version of history was metaphor-laden and, as such it drew on literary works and appealed particularly to literary men. As a work of *belles-lettres*, it drew on literary sources and informed by them. Toynbee was steeped in the works of Meredith and Browning. In particular the theme of 'Challenge and Response' is prominent in Browning:

> Then welcome each rebuff
> That turns earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand, but to![9]

One particular literary image which had a diffuse yet unmistakable impact on Toynbee's thinking is worth drawing attention to here – that of the Asiatic barbarian horde, conceived of as simultaneously the destroyer and the potential renewal of Western civilization. The image was a popular one in the opening decades of the twentieth century as the following works testify: Herman Hesse's *Blik ins Chaos* (1920), Vladimir Solovyev's *War, Progress and the End of History* (1900, tr. A Bakshy, 1915), T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* (1922), Saint-John Perse's *Anabase* (1924) and Constantin Cavafy's poem *Perimenontas tous varvarous* ('Waiting for the Barbarians', 1904). Considering the literary interaction from the other direction, Toynbee's influence has probably been stronger on literary men than on historians. Among those so influenced were Aldous Huxley, Ernst Robert Curtius and Ortega y Gasset. Toynbee's theories of the cyclical rise and fall of civilizations have proved especially popular among science fiction writers and his ideas were excitingly reworked in such fictions as Isaac Asimov's *Foundation Trilogy* (1951–53), Charles Harness's *The Paradox Men* (1953), Frank Herbert's *Dune* (1965) and Larry Niven's *The World Out of Time* (1967).[10]

Even so, any habitué of London's second-hand bookshops will know that (with the possible exceptions of Sir Arthur Bryant's *Age of Endurance* and Eisenhower's *Crusade in Europe*) there is no book one is more likely to find

than the two-volume abridged edition of Toynbee's *A Study of History*.[11] Whether in its abridged or in its complete form, Toynbee's book is no longer fashionable. From the 1930s onwards, the book was subjected to a series of damaging attacks by professional historians, A.J.P. Taylor, H.R. Trevor-Roper, R.H. Tawney and Peter Geyl among them.[12] As far as Toynbee's views on the history of the Middle East and Islamic civilization were concerned, these were critically appraised by some of the leading figures working in the field, among them Gustav von Grunebaum, Elie Kedourie, Bertold Spuler and Gotthold Weil.[13] Of course, many of Toynbee's errors in this area were not the product of his system, but reflected his reading of the relatively small volume of orientalist literature that was available at the time. He made heavy us of such works as Thomas Arnold's *The Caliphate* (Oxford, 1924) and Edward Granville Browne's *Literary History of Persia,* (2 vols., London, 1902–6).

Nevertheless, while Toynbee's mistakes were hard to miss, it was still possible for Middle Eastern historians to find fruitful insights and structuring ideas in *A Study of History* and in fact his influence on writers in the field of Middle Eastern history was considerable. Albert Hourani, in particular, paid eloquent and moving tribute to Toynbee's scholarship and vision as well as noting the influence of *A Study of History* on Hourani's own work, particularly with regard to minorities and the notion of cultural mimesis.[14] Marshal Hodgson's three-volume *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (1974) obviously owed much to *A Study of History* – especially Hodgson's determination to study civilizations in terms of their inner development and the emphasis on the quasi-autonomy of Turko-Iranian civilization and on mimesis of the 'proletariat'. Nevertheless Hodgson did now swallow Toynbee whole, for he believed that the fundamental unit of study for the historian was not a 'civilization', but rather the whole region which extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific shore of Asia.[15] Hodgson also, of course, derived some of his ideas from a direct reading of Ibn Khaldun. It is more difficult to be dogmatic about influences elsewhere. However, David Ayalon's *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom. A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society* (London, 1956) was also perhaps influenced, albeit at several removes, by Toynbee's ideas on challenge and response. Similarly, Montgomery Watt's *Muhammad at Mecca* (1953) and his *Muhammad at Medina* (1956) echo Toynbee's portrayal of the Prophet as a man who obeyed the law of withdrawal and return (but who however failed to obey the law of etherealization). Finally, Ernest Gellner's reworking and updating of Ibn Khaldun may have owed something to the intervening influence of Toynbee, as is suggested by his use of the concept of a reservoir of the external tribal proletariat.[16] Toynbee's anti-colonial and anti-Zionist position would also have recommended him

to Arab historians and the first volume of Somervell's abridgement of Toynbee was translated into Arabic in 1955, thus making his ideas accessible to the Arab world and Arab historians.[17]

The positive and negative critiques referred to above make it unnecessary for me to undertake a general survey of Toynbee's views about Islam and what he took to be Islamic civilization. Instead more restricted examination of the relationship between *A Study of History* and Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* provides a framework for thinking about a range of important issues in Islamic history. What sort of relation was there between nomads and slave states? What sort of culture do nomads have? What causes nomad invasions of settled societies? Is there an inevitable cycle of decay which dynasties of nomad origin must undergo? What sort of relationship was there between the slave state regimes of the Mamluks and the Ottomans on the one hand and the nomad dynasties on the other hand? Not only have such questions loomed large in the writings of Ibn Khaldun and Toynbee, they have continued to attract debate in more recent decades.[18]

In considering Toynbee's version of Ibn Khaldun, one should bear in mind that Toynbee's transmission of the latter's theories was of some importance, for, until the appearance of Franz Rosenthal's translation, Toynbee did more than anyone else to popularize Ibn Khaldun's theories to the English-speaking world.[19] A consideration of the relationship between Toynbee and Ibn Khaldun has to be somewhat complex. There is what Toynbee said Ibn Khaldun said. Then there is what Ibn Khaldun actually said. Then one should consider the limits of Toynbee's agreement with Ibn Khaldun and the alternative sources which mediated or in some cases substituted for Toynbee's superficially Khaldunian vision of history.

The North African philosopher-historian, Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) was one of Toynbee's intellectual heroes – in the same grand pantheon (presented in volume 10 of *A Study of History*) as St Augustine, Juwayni, Clarendon and Gibbon. In Toynbee's eyes, Ibn Khaldun had all the distinguishing marks of a truly great man. First he exemplified the law of withdrawal. He withdrew from a turbulent career in the Muslim courts of North Africa in 1375. Secondly, he was a perfect exemplar of the law of etherealization (by which Toynbee meant the abstraction or spiritualization of lived experience), for in a four-year period of retirement he wrote the *Muqaddima*, a theoretical examination of the laws of history – that is of the principles underlying the rise and fall of dynasties. Thirdly, he exemplified the law of return, as he returned to pursue his career in the politics of the Maghrib and Egypt.[20]

Moreover, as one might have expected, there was much in the contents of the *Muqaddima* that was congenial to Toynbee. Ibn Khaldun, like Gibbon, Volney and Toynbee himself, received his impulse to write his

historical work from ruins – in Ibn Khaldun's case by ruinous state of North Africa.[21] The historian's epiphanic vision can be considered as a topos in Western culture. (However, Toynbee held it against the Arabs that in the past they had shown no curiosity about the ruins which surrounded them.[22]) In the *Muqaddima*, Ibn Khaldun had written about the evidence of former grandeur surviving in an era of chaos and desolation: 'Formerly the whole region between the Sudan and the Mediterranean had been settled. This fact is attested by the relics of civilization there, such as monuments, architectural sculpture, and the visible remains of villages and hamlets.'[23] How had such grandeur given way to desolation? Was the passage from imperial grandeur to desolation inevitable? Ibn Khaldun's attempt to answer the question was a unique one in Islamic historiography.

As far as Ibn Khaldun was concerned, the history of North Africa was punctuated by two great devastating invasions, first that of the seventh-century Arab Islamic armies and then that of the Bani Hilal and the Bani Sulaym tribes in the eleventh century. The first of these invasions occupied the town and did little or no damage to sedentary society. The second invasion by Arab tribes, whom he reported were despatched by a Fatimid vizier, devastated North Africa in 1051 and the shadows of this devastation were still visible in fourteenth-century North Africa. The results of the arrival of those nomadic Arabs were still visible 350 years later.

The notion that rise and fall of civilizations is to be understood in terms of an opposition between nomad and sedentary is central to Ibn Khaldun's thought. Nomads, stimulated by the challenge of the desert's hardship, acquire superior *esprit de corps* (*'asabiyya*). Sedentary groups, by contrast, have little or not *'asabiyya* and nomads with *'asabiyya* will triumph over a sedentary culture even though they are outnumbered by the forces of the sedentary culture they conquer. Although *'asabiyya* provides the bonding necessary for conquest, religion alone allows the foundation of durable empires, for religion doubles the effectiveness of a tribe which already has *'asabiyya*.

The earliest Arab invasion of North Africa, in the first century of Islam, was driven by religion. The eleventh-century depredations of the Arab tribes of Bani Hilal and Bani Sulaym were not and their consequences were purely negative. Toynbee had no reason to call into question the account given by Ibn Khaldun of the effects of the Bani Hilal invasion, though these views have since come under fire from many directions.[24] The seventh-century Arabs were able to fund a durable empire encompassing North Africa. Nevertheless, as they became sedentary, their *'asabiyya* decayed and the dominant Arab elite fell prey to the twin perils of luxury and autocracy. According to Ibn Khaldun, four generations, or roughly 120 years, was the normal span of an empire established by nomads over sedentaries. Toynbee agreed with all this. More generally, he praised the *Muqaddima* for its grand

sweep. The *Muqaddima*, like *A Study of History*, demonstrated that the historical process was cyclical. Moreover, Toynbee found Ibn Khaldun to be congenially pessimistic. Toynbee, whose *A Study of History* became more theocentric as it progressed, also welcomed Ibn Khaldun's view (related in Toynbee's words) 'that human affairs do not constitute an intelligible field of study'. According to Toynbee, 'Ibn Khaldun ... gave a vision of history bursting the bounds of this World and breaking through into an Other World'. Ibn Khaldun had progressed from sociology to theology. Such broad affinities attracted Toynbee and led him to appropriate Ibn Khaldun as an intellectual ancestor. (As Jorge Luis Borges has observed, 'The fact is that every writer creates his own precursors. His work modified our perception of the past.')[25]

However, Toynbee's vision of history differed from that of Ibn Khaldun in a number of important respects. Toynbee rejected the view that *'asabiyya* was virtually a monopoly of the nomads – or the 'external proletariat' in his peculiar terminology.[26] He deplored the fact that Ibn Khaldun was unable to envisage urban communities as possessing *'asabiyya*. Surely, Toynbee thought, the inhabitants of Italian city states of the fourteenth century had possessed *'asabiyya*? Toynbee denied that the *'asabiyya* developed as a product of nomadic living in the desert made those tribes more capable than others. He argued that the particular cycle of rise and decay sketched out by Ibn Khaldun applied only to empires founded by nomads of which (according to Toynbee's system) there had only been five in the history of the world: Amorites, Chaldians, seventh-eighth century Arabs, Mongols and Ottomans.

Ibn Khaldun's failings were to be ascribed to the relativity of his thought – that is, it was relative to time and place and the information available to him in the backwater that was the Maghreb in the fourteenth century. (But it is surely a paradox that the historical philosophy of the man from the medieval North African backwater seems currently to be more fashionable than that of Toynbee, the urbane twentieth-century academic.) Toynbee had been stimulated by his reading of Ibn Khaldun, but, as was the case with his reading of Gibbon, the stimulus took the form of provocation rather than simple absorption. One of the primary aims of *A Study of History* had been to disprove Gibbon's contention that the triumph of barbarism and religion was the ruin of the Roman empire, or indeed of any empire. So Toynbee's version of history sought to prove that barbarian invasions are a symptom of the empire's decay, rather than its cause. For complex reasons, he was unwilling to accept Ibn Khaldun's assertion that nomad hordes could be the prime agents in either the creation or the decay of civilizations. Civilizations are always the engines of history and they always carry the seeds of their decay within themselves.

Toynbee thought of the nomads as an external proletariat waiting on the edge of civilization (Roman, Islamic, Chinese). The nomad has had to struggle very hard to master his environment. In order to master that environment, he has had to adapt to it and, in adapting to it, he incurs the penalty of over-specialization – that is he loses the power to be socially creative. Since nomads are not creative and not innovators, they do not really initiate their invasions. Rather, those invasions are to be explained in terms of the push of changing climatic conditions, as well as the pull of a vacuum in the neighbouring sedentary society.[27] In Toynbee's model, the nomad seems hardly human, for he more closely resembles Dr Doolittle's Push-Me-Pull-You beast. The Mongol for instance succeeded in transforming himself into a centaur, but in doing so he renounced humanity.[28] At various times, Toynbee compared nomadic groupings to the sea, or, alternatively, to insect-hives. These are dehumanizing similes and it is probably significant that in his main discussion of nomads Toynbee drifted on from discussing the nomad to ponderings on Bolshevism and dystopic visions of the future.[29]

When Toynbee came to deal with those nomad invasions which were apparently driven by ideological motivations, such as, for example, the seventh-century Islamic invasion and the eighteenth-century Wahhabi campaigns, Toynbee argued (quite reasonably) that such religious movements were not really the creations of a nomadic desert culture, but were rather the creations of oasis dwellers and their military campaigns were similarly directed by oasis dwellers.[30] The nomad's potential creativity was invariably 'arrested' by the harshness of his environment and his narrow concentration on adapting to it. Creativity could not lie within the tribe or horde – still less in the military horde. As conquerors, the nomads brought no creative innovations to the societies they conquered. They were unproductive, parasitic drones.[31] At best, as in the cases of the Mongols and the Ottomans, the conquerors converted themselves from shepherds of flocks to shepherds of men. (All this was in contrast to the views H.G. Wells put forward in his history of the world, where the nomad was praised as the renewer of culture – or as the plough which breaks up the old soil, of decayed civilizations. Wells's Mongols were free spirits, adventurous folk bringing new life to the communities they passed through.)[32] Some parts of *A Study of History* were retracted or amended in the volume devoted to *Reconsiderations*,[33] but the portrait of the nomad as mindless external proletariat was never explicitly retracted by Toynbee. However, when he came to write his fine monograph on tenth-century Byzantine history, the climate theory had been quietly dropped and Chinggis Khan was praised for his organizing genius.[34]

Although Toynbee's assessment of Ibn Khaldun was appreciative, it was

neither fair nor accurate. Ibn Khaldun was judged as a failed historian of civilizations. However, Ibn Khaldun had set out to write a history of dynasties (*duwal* s. *dawla*), not a history of civilizations. Incidentally, the Arabic word for dynasty originally carried within the implication of rotation, of cyclical rise and decline.[35] Secondly, Ibn Khaldun did not seek to elaborate a theory that would apply to all dynasties the world over, or even to all dynasties in the *Dar al-Islam*. Explicitly his theory was designed to make sense of North African history in the Islamic period.[36] It is true that he drew examples from pre-Islamic history and the history of eastern lands and it is true also that he extended the scope of *Kitab al-'Ibar* (the chronicle which followed on from the *Muqaddima*) to cover eastern Islamic lands. Nevertheless, the *Muqaddima* was primarily addressed to theoretical problems arising out of the study of North African history and the role of the Berbers in that history.

In reproducing Ibn Khaldun's comments on the deleterious role of the Bani Hilal, Toynbee grossly overstressed the importance of this invasion on Ibn Khaldun's thinking. At the opening of the *Muqaddima*, Ibn Khaldun does indeed remark on the eleventh century invasion, but he placed greater emphasis on the ravages of the Black Death in the fourteenth century: 'in the middle of the eighth century [*hijri*] civilization both in the East and the West was visited by a destructive plague which devastated nations and caused populations to vanish. It swallowed up many of the good things of civilization and wiped them out. It overtook dynasties at the time of their senility, when they had reached their duration ... It was as if the voice of existence in the world had called out for oblivion and restriction and the world had responded to its call.'[37] Ibn Khaldun went on to declare the world was so different after the Black Death that this drastic change necessitated his writing of a historical account. Thus the writing of the *Muqaddima* and the *Kitab al-'Ibar* was a response to the recent plague (in the 1340s), rather than to the distant turmoil of the eleventh century. Incidentally, Ibn Khaldun was not consistent on the causes of the great plague, but in a striking passage he suggested that plague was a product of civilization, for, if too many people were concentrated in the cities, then such a concentration led to the putrefaction of the air.[38]

In stressing or overstressing the importance of the Bani Hilal and in some of his other interpretations of the *Muqaddima*, Toynbee was not relying on his own unsupported reading of that book, but was rather drawing on *Les siècles obscurs du Maghreb* (Paris, 1927) by Emile Félix Gautier, who was at that time Professor of Geography at the University of Algiers. For Gautier, and then for Toynbee, Ibn Khaldun was the solitary genius of the Islamic late Middle Ages (according to Toynbee 'a nasty brutish civilization'). Ibn Khaldun was, in Gautier's words, '*unique, il écrase tout, il est génial*'.

Moreover, Ibn Khaldun was a member of the same school of history writing as Joinville and St Simon – the *gentilhomme* school of history writing. Comparisons with Western gentry were permissible, for though an Oriental, Ibn Khaldun had a Western perception of history. There was '*un parfum de renaissance*' about him. Ibn Khaldun had struggles to make sense of Maghribi history, though palpably that history showed no evolution in a Western sense, so Ibn Khaldun was doomed to brilliant failure.

In his monograph on Ibn Khaldun, Yves Lacoste has well explored the way Gautier made the Hilali invasions the fulcrum point of North African history, in which Arab was equated with nomad and nomad with destroyer, in opposition to the indigenous sedentary Berber.[39] Gautier seems to have believed that the historical message of Ibn Khaldun's writings was that the North African Arabs and Berbers were and would always remain unfit for nationhood. According to Gautier, the Arab had lineage, but not patrimony. There is surely a sad paradox in the fact that Toynbee, in seeking to escape a Eurocentric vision and in attempting to find support among historians of other cultures for the ideas he put forward in *A Study of History*, should have placed himself in the hands of Gautier. However, Toynbee, who was to argue in *A Study of History* that the Islamic conquests and the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates (somewhat belatedly) provided the Achaemenian empire, a product of Syriac civilization, with its universal empire, after roughly nine centuries of Hellenic rule, must have found congenial Gautier's similarly bold thesis that Berber culture was the revival of Carthaginian civilization after so many centuries of Roman rule.

On occasions when Toynbee side-stepped Gautier, he made use not exactly of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* but, as has been noted, of De Slane's translation of it, *Les Prolégomènes*. His dependence on this translation brought problems. For one thing Toynbee did not realize that Ibn Khaldun used *'Arab* and its plural *'Urban* sometimes to apply to those people who were genealogically and linguistically Arab and sometimes more specifically to refer those Arabs who pursued a pastoral, camel-rearing mode of existence in the desert. Similarly, Toynbee failed to realise that, in contra-posing *'umran hadari* to *'umran badawi*, Ibn Khaldun was contrasting settled urban culture not to nomadic Bedouin culture alone, but rather to the culture of both the Bedouin and the *Fellahin* (peasants).[40] *'Asabiyya* was usually translated by de Slane as *esprit de corps*. This is in itself was not a terrible translation, but when that translation was transplanted into *A Study of History*, it acquired misleading Bergsonian overtones of *élan vital*.[41]

'Asabiyya was subsequently translated by Franz Rosenthal in his English translation as 'group feeling'.[42] The concept carried by the Arabic word is thought by many to derive from the root verb *'asaba* meaning 'he twisted', so that the word might possibly have summoned up the image of men twisted

together by blood links or physical proximity. Alternatively, perhaps *'asabiyya* should be derived from the noun *'isaba*, which may refer to something wound round the head, potentially then a headband which might serve as a sign of tribal or factional allegiance. Another sense of *'isaba*, which we will come to, is band or league (presumably held together by *'asabiyya*). A careful reading of Ibn Khaldun, of the *'Ibar* and the *Ta'rif* (the *'Ibar*'s autobiographical tailpiece) as well as the *Muqaddima*, shows that Ibn Khaldun did not think of *'asabiyya* as being a monopoly of the nomad, nor did he think that blood relationship was the only form of *'asabiyya* bonding.[43] Clients of tribal groups may acquire *'asabiyya*. Urban groups, such as the Mamluks of fourteenth-century Cairo, could constitute an effective and cohesive group (*'isaba*).[44] As we shall see below, a Mamluk corps infused with an artificial *'asabiyya* could provide a ruler with renewed strength. Ibn Khaldun did not think that the rise and fall of dynasties was solely to be interpreted in terms of the rise of nomad conquerors with *'asabiyya* and their subsequent decline as their *'asabiyya* declined, and, for example, Ibn Khaldun regarded the Mamluk regime as one regime among many which had a different pattern of history.

Toynbee seems to have known of the *Ta'rif* and the *'Ibar* only through extracts cited De Slane in the annotation of the *Prolégomènes*. Therefore Toynbee was unaware that he and Ibn Khaldun held diametrically opposed views on Timur. Toynbee regarded Timur as a product of a sedentary society and as the military defender of that society against Eurasian nomads.[45] Timur, however, betrayed his destiny by his excessive militarism and by his failure to devote himself exclusively to the Eurasian front. In Toynbee's eyes Timur should have been able to shift the boundary between the desert and the sown in favour of the latter and this he failed to do. For Ibn Khaldun, on the other hand, Timur, though a Turk, was the heir and incarnation of Chagatai Mongol traditions and it was among the Chagatai more than anyone else that the Mongols had preserved their primitive *badawa*, or 'desert-dwelling qualities'.[46] One gets the impression from the *Ta'rif* that Ibn Khaldun was at first eager to meet such a perfect example of the kind of vigorous nomad he had been writing about in the *Muqaddima*.

Toynbee's apparent reliance on Ibn Khaldun was, to borrow from Toynbee's own terminology, a case of pseudo-affiliation. The real sources for his views on nomads and their impact on the Middle East lay firmly within his own culture. Since Toynbee not only lumped Eurasian and Afrasian nomads together, and mixed camel rearers in with horse and sheep rearers, but even at time confounded racial migrations with the set patterns of transhumant nomadism, the influences on his thinking were diverse and confusing.

To take an almost forgotten classic of *belles-lettres* first, Thomas de Quincey's *Revolt of the Tartars or, Flight of the Kalmuk Khan and his people*

from the Russian Territories to the Frontiers of China (1837) is a magnificent account of the sufferings of the Mongol Oirats under Russian rule and of their disastrous *Völkerwänderung* in 1771 eastwards from the Volga region.[47] De Quincey's meditation on the sufferings of this racial minority foreshadows Toynbee's writings on the Armenians, Greeks and Turks in the twentieth century. De Quincey's essay is a litany of man's inhumanity to man and a rhetorical model for writing about the sufferings of oppressed minorities. Toynbee certainly read the *Revolt of the Tartars*, for it is cited in *A Study of History*.[48] De Quincey's ability to make imaginative comparisons may have struck a sympathetic chord in Toynbee, for the former compared the Kalmuk migration not only to the movements of the Huns, Avars and Mongols, but also the French retreat from Moscow, the Israelites in the Wilderness, the Athenians during the Plague and the Peloponnesian War and Vespasian's siege of Jerusalem. It is also conceivable that De Quincey's writing may have influenced Toynbee's own metaphor-laden and dehumanized image of nomads. De Quincey wrote of the Kalmuks, 'In unity of purpose connecting this myriad of wills, and in the blind but unerring aim at a mark so remote, there is something which recalls to mind those almighty instincts that propel the migrations of the swallow and the lemming, or of the life-withering marches of the locust.'

The second source was less eloquent, but gave crucial support to Toynbee's contention that nomad invasions were not generated from within the nomad communities, but were always a blind response to external factors. Ellsworth Huntington in *Civilization and Climate* (3rd ed. 1924) elaborated a theory of a six-hundred-year climatic cycle which, among other things, explained the chronology of nomadic irruptions upon settled society. When the steppe became desiccated, it shrank in area and then the nomad was driven to prey upon neighbouring civilizations. When the rains became more abundant, the nomad returned to his pastures once more. This was the 'Pulse of Asia'. Toynbee extended Huntington's theory to cover African as well as Eurasian nomads. According to Toynbee, the period from 975 to 1025 was one of the key periods of desiccation and consequently of nomadic depredations, as evidenced by the Selijuks, the Cumans, the Bani Hilal and the Almoravids. The years 1575–1675 constituted another such epoch when not only the Oirats but also the Arab tribal federations of Anaza and Shamar were on the move.[49] It is perhaps worth nothing that Huntington's theories regarding the causes of nomadic invasions are no longer popular among historians of climate – if they ever were.[50] The *Annales* historian Emmanuel le Roi Ladurie has observed that Huntington tended to assume what he was seeking to prove and that he sometimes worked backwards from the known nomadic invasion to the presumed desiccation of the steppe.[51]

Another book which certainly had an influence on Toynbee's thinking

was a book by Owen Lattimore on Manchuria.[52] Lattimore's book was a study of a region which in the 1920s seemed to be cockpit of the world and the arena for the competing economic ambitions of China, Russia and Japan. Up until 1931, when Japan resorted to force, the economic colonization of Manchuria by immigrant Chinese peasants seemed to be prevailing. Lattimore presented the rivalries of the regional powers as the clash of three civilizations, Chinese, Russian and Western. He regarded Japan as a thoroughly Westernized country, unlike China, where although it adopted Western technology such as railways and weapons, these features, once absorbed, acquired new functions within the structure of Chinese culture. Russia, Tsarist and then Bolshevik, was by comparison with China a young culture. Lattimore's analysis of the crisis of the 1920s and early 30s was set firmly in a historical context and explored Manchuria's historical role as a tribal reservoir at the disposition of the rulers of China. Manchuria was a frontier region where nomad barbarians close to the wall acquired a certain amount, however small, of Chinese culture. Lattimore explored the way in which nomad conquerors from the frontier regions took over China and, as rulers of China, absorbed the Chinese dynastic model, adopting Chinese administrative procedures and other aspects of that culture. Superficially, the nomad seemed to have conquered. More profoundly, he was conquered by the stronger cultural formation of sedentary civilization. Gradually the nomads lost the characteristics of conquering aliens and this led to their overthrow. Then a native Chinese dynasty might rule for a while, but eventually a new barbarian invasion would renew the cycle. (Lattimore's own thinking on this topic was perhaps stimulated by Confucian theories about dynastic cycles and the role of nomads in the creation and destruction of dynasties.)[53]

That Toynbee should have found Lattimore's ideas about Manchuria's past and future prospects congenial is not surprising.[54] For when Lattimore was travelling in Manchuria for his research in the years he was carrying with him a copy of Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (1918). According to Lattimore himself, it had exercised a big and possibly deleterious influence on his book on Manchuria.[55] Spengler had put forward the notion that cultures are born young, become mature, grow old and die, and this was to influence Lattimore's thinking about China. More particularly Lattimore absorbed Spengler's notion of pseudomorphosis – that is, of old cultural drives accommodating themselves to superficially new cultural forms. Although Toynbee never regarded himself as any sort of disciple of Spengler, it is obvious that his philosophy of history was influenced by that of Spengler in a number of important respects.[56]

Toynbee regarded the Mamluk and Ottoman conquerors' adaptation to settled government as 'pseudomorphic'. This brings us to the exceptional

cases of nomads who founded durable regimes. Ibn Khaldun was primarily concerned with problems of government in North Africa and therefore not particularly interested in this question. Indeed, he barely mentions the Ottomans in the *Muqaddima*.[57] Nevertheless in several key passages in the *Ta'rif* (a quasi-autobiographical tailpiece to the *Muqaddima* and the 'Ibar), he did note the role of Mamluks firstly in strengthening the Ayyubid dynasty with their artificially inculcated *'asabiyya* and secondly in prolonging this reinvigoration through the continuing recruitment of children of nomad stock. In the *Ta'rif*, he observed how al-Salih Ayyub added to the *'isaba* of his dynasty by purchasing Mamluks. In a much quoted passage from his history he commented on the Divine Providence which in the thirteenth century provided the Islamic lands with Mamluks to protect them from the infidel Mongols: 'This he did by sending to them out of this Turkish people and out of its mighty and numerous tribes, guardian amirs and devoted defenders who are imported as slaves from the lands of heathendom to the lands of Islam. Their status of slavery is indeed a blessing ... from Divine Providence. They embrace Islam with the determination of true believers, while retaining their nomadic virtues, which are undefiled by vile nature, unmixed with the filth of lustful pleasures, unmarred by the habits of civilization, with their youthful strength unshattered by excess of luxury.'[58] Thus the Kipchak Mamluks brought with them from their pastoral ancestry the nomadic virtues (*akhlaq al-badawiya*), but obviously their *'asabiyya* was artificially created in Egypt by education in the barracks. As we have noted above, there is no sign that Ibn Khaldun thought that the Mamluks had fallen prey to an inevitable cycle of decay. Ibn Khaldun's admiration for the Mamluk regime and the fighting abilities of Mamluks contrasts strongly with Toynbee's disparagement of them. (Toynbee's poor opinion of the medieval Mamluks seems to have been influenced by French accounts of the poor showing made by the disorderly 'neo-Mamluk' cavalry of Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey at the Battle of the Pyramids in 1798.)[59]

Be that as it may, when it came to explaining how the Mamluk and Ottoman regimes worked, Toynbee relied not on Ibn Khaldun's theories, but on those of Plato.[60] The idea that the Ottoman Palace School system and its subsidiary Janissary corps might be best understood as a retrospective acting out in history of a blueprint for virtuous and stable government that was first sketched out by Plato in his *Republic* was not original with Toynbee. The idea was first sketched out by Alfred Howe Lybyer in his *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent* (Cambridge, 1913), an account of Ottoman administrative institutions in the sixteenth century that was almost entirely dependent on Western sources, travellers and diplomats.[61] (Toynbee had been introduced to Lybyer by D.G. Hogarth at the Paris Peace Conference.) According to Lybyer, the

Ottomans, a dynasty of nomadic pastoralist origin (who were therefore incapable of generating a genuine civilization or new techniques of government), applied pastoralist answers to the problems of administering a vast empire over a long period of time. The subject population were the *raiyya*, or the flock; the graduates of the Palace School were the guardians; the Janissaries were the sheepdogs protecting the flock from the wolves. Toynbee nevertheless greatly developed and elaborated Lybyer's metaphor and he went on to apply it to the Mamluks and Mongols – though he considered the Mamluk regime to be an instance of where the sheepdogs had eventually changed their coats and became wolves who fed upon the flock that they pretended to protect. (Subsequently the sheepdog metaphor was picked up and developed still further by Sir Karl Popper and by Ernest Gellner.)[62] But Plato's knowledge of Ottoman society was perfectly negligible. Moreover, those who have followed the Platonic model have tended to exaggerate both the importance of the Janissaries in the Ottoman military machine and the degree to which the Janissaries were segregated from the rest of the populace. There is really more to be said regarding the Janissaries as, in the long run at least, local factional corporations.[63]

Toynbee's approach to Ibn Khaldun and Islamic history in general suffered from various problems. In his determination to refute Gibbon's notion that the downfall of the Roman empire (or indeed of any empire) could have been due to 'the triumph of barbarism and religion', he went to absurd lengths to deny the barbarian nomads any initiative or originality. Toynbee's attempt to extend and adapt Ibn Khaldun's theory to apply outside the Maghrib was perhaps also dubious. His account of the role of the nomad in Middle Eastern history was also impaired by his second or even third hand knowledge of Eastern sources. His knowledge of Ibn Khaldun was filtered through de Slane and Gautier. His ideas about nomads on the frontiers of China owed much to Lattimore's Spenglerian formulations. Toynbee thought metaphorically and the rhetorical persuasiveness of his ideas owes much to the strength of the metaphors employed by him – metaphors which may have had their genesis in Plato's *Republic*, De Quincey's *Revolt of the Tartars* or Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*. Such metaphoric formations as nomadic reservoirs, the circulating flow of elites, the contrasting roles of wolves, sheepdogs and sheep can strike deep chords with readers. *A Study of History*, like an artfully constructed novel, can and should be read for pleasure.

'Now what's going to happen to us without Barbarians? –
Those people were a kind of solution.' (Cavafy)[64]

NOTES

1. R. Browning, *Poetical Works* (London, 1906), Vol.1, p.261.
2. A.J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol.7, pp.ix–x.
3. Toynbee, *Acquaintances* (London, 1967), p.46.
4. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.10, pp.22–3, 218; idem, *Reconsiderations*, p.592.
5. On Toynbee's brief tenure of the chair at King's College, see R. Clogg, 'Politics and the Academy: Arnold Toynbee and the Koraes Chair' (London, 1986), first published as *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.21 (1985) no.4 (special issue), pp.1–117; on Toynbee's life more generally, see W.H. McNeill, *Arnold J. Toynbee: a life* (Oxford, 1989).
6. On the relationship between *A Study of History* and Toynbee's political concerns at Chatham House, see Elie Kedourie, 'The Chatham House version' in idem, *The Chatham House Version, and Other Middle Eastern Studies* (London, 1970), pp.351–94.
7. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.5, pp.324, 461; Vol.8, pp.19–25.
8. Toynbee, 'The value of Oriental history for historians', *Journal of the Panjab Historical Society*, Vol.12 (1960), p.17.
9. R. Browning, 'Rabbi Ben Ezra' in Browning, *Poetical Works*, Vol.1, p.581. On Browning's influence, see Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.10, pp.317, 331–2. It is additionally possible that Toynbee was introduced to Islamic themes by 'Ferishtah's Fancies'. Browning set 'Ferishtah's Fancies' in seventeenth-century Safavid Persia and drew heavily upon the inspiration of the *Bidpai* fables and of Firdawsi's *Shahnama*.
10. T. Shippey and B. Stableford 'History in SF' in J. Clute and T. Shippey (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (2nd ed. London, 1993), pp.655–7.
11. It was abridged in two volumes by David C. Somervell, as *A Study of History. Abridgement of Volumes I–VI*, London, 1946 and *A Study of History. Abridgement of Volumes VII–X*, 1957.
12. Some of the most important criticisms, including those by the historians named above, were conveniently collected and reprinted in M. Ashley (ed.), *Toynbee and history: critical essays and reviews* (Boston, 1956). V. Mehta's *Fly and Fly Bottle* (London, 1963), which is based on interviews with, among others, Toynbee, Geyl, Trevor-Roper and Taylor, gives a human dimension to the scholarly but sometimes acrimonious debate. S.F. Morton's *A Bibliography of Arnold J. Toynbee* (Oxford, 1980), pp.3–38, provides a remarkably comprehensive bibliography of the responses provoked by *A Study of History* up to 1980. C.T. McIntire and M. Perry (eds.), *Toynbee Reappraisals* (Toronto, 1989) consists mostly, though not entirely, of papers which seek to rehabilitate Toynbee as a historian.
13. G.E. von Grunebaum, 'Toynbee's concept of Islamic civilization', in E.T. Gargan (ed.), *The Intent of Toynbee's History: a co-operative appraisal* (Chicago, 1961); Elie Kedourie, 'The Chatham House version' in *The Chatham House Version, and Other Middle Eastern Studies*, (London, 1970), pp.351–94; Bertold Spuler, 'Einige Gedankspitter zu Toynbees Bild der orientalischen Geschichte', *Der Islam*, 30 (1952), pp.214–21; Gotthold Weil, 'Arnold Toynbee's conception of the future of Islam', *Middle Eastern Affairs*, 2 (1951), pp.3–17.
14. A. Hourani, 'Toynbee's Vision of History', in idem, *Europe and the Middle East* (London, 1980), pp.135–60; cf. idem, 'Patterns of the Past' in T. Naff (ed.), *Paths to the Middle East: Ten Scholars Look Back* (New York, 1933), pp.34–5.
15. Hourani, 'Patterns of the Past', p.46.
16. E. Gellner, *Muslim Society* (Cambridge, 1981), p.80; cf. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.3, p.238.
17. Toynbee and Somervell, *Bahth fi al-tarikh*, tr. T. Baqir (Baghdad, 1955); cf. A.A. Sousa and H.S. Tikriti (eds.), *Buhuth mihrajan al-muarrikh Tuyinbi* (Toynbee presentation volume) (Baghdad, 1979).
18. See for example, P. Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism* (London, 1974), pp.217–28; idem, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London, 1974), pp.505–6; D. Ayalon, 'Mamlukiyyat (B) Ibn Khaldun's View of the Mamluk Phenomenon', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2 (1980), pp.340–49; P. Crone, 'The Tribe and the State' in J.A. Hall (ed.), *States in History* (Oxford, 1986), pp.48–77; idem, 'Tribes and States in the Middle East', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1993), pp.353–76; Ernest Gellner, *Muslim*

Society; A.M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World* (Cambridge, 1984); P.S. Khoury and J. Kostiner, *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (London, 1991); R. Lindner, 'What Was a Nomad Tribe?', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.24 (1982), pp.689–711; idem, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* (Bloomington, Ind., 1983).

19. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.3, pp.321–8, 473–6; Vol.10, pp.84–7, 236; Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* was translated by Franz Rosenthal as *The Muqaddimah, and Introduction to History*, 3 vols. (London, 1958). Toynbee relied on the older French translation by MacGuckin de Slane, *Prolégomènes d'Ebn-Khaldoun. Notices et extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale* pp.xix–xxi, Paris, 1862–8.
20. The secondary literature on Ibn Khaldun is vast; see the bibliography in A. Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldun in Modern Scholarship. A Study in Orientalism* (London, 1981), pp.231–318. Significant work which has appeared since that bibliography includes: A. Abdessselem, *Ibn Khaldun et ses lecteurs* (Paris, 1983); D. Ayalon, 'The Mamluks and Ibn Xaldun', *Israel Oriental Studies*, 10 (1980), pp.11–13; A. Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldun: an Essay in Reinterpretation* (London, 1982); M. Brett, 'The Way of the Nomad', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol.58 (1995), pp.251–96; C. Fleisher, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism and Ibn Khaldunism in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol.18 (1983), pp.198–220; G. Newby, 'Ibn Khaldun and Frederick Jackson Turner: Islam and the Frontier Experience', ibid., pp.274–85; F. Rosenthal, 'Ibn Khaldun in his Time' (May 27, 1332 – March 17, 1406)', ibid., pp.166–78; Maya Shatzmiller, *Historiographie Mérinide. Ibn Khaldun et ses contemporains* (Leiden, 1982).
21. On historiographic visions amidst ruins, see E. Gibbon, *The Autobiographies of Edward Gibbon*, J. Murray (ed.) (London, 1896), pp.405–6; Comte de Volney, *Les Ruines: ou Méditation sur les Révolutions des Empires* (Paris, 1876), pp.9–12. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.10, pp.134–7; and cf. T.W. Africa, 'Toynbee: The Time Traveller', in McIntire and Perry, *Toynbee Reappraisals*, pp.105–126. See also, more generally, Rose Macaulay, *Pleasure of Ruins* (London, 1953).
22. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.10, pp.7–10.
23. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*, Vol.1, p.305.
24. J. Berque, 'De nouveau sur les Banu Hilal', *Studia Islamica*, Vol.36 (1972), pp.99–111; M. Brett, 'The Military Interest of the Battle of Haydaran', in V.J. Parry and M. Yapp (eds.), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London, 1975), pp.78–88; M. Brett, 'Ibn Khaldun and the Arabisation of North Africa', *Maghreb Review*, Vol.4 (1979), pp.9–16; M. Brett and E. Fentress, *The Berbers* (Oxford, 1966), pp.132–40; C. Cahen, 'Quelques mots sur les Hilaliens et le nomadisme', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol.11 (1968), pp.130–33; Yves Lacoste, *Ibn Khaldun: the Birth of History and the Past of the Third World* (London, 1984), pp.65–78; J. Poncet, 'Le mythe de la catastrophe Hilalienne', *Annales, Economies Sociétés*, Vol.22 (1967), pp.1099–1120.
25. Jorge Luis Borges, 'Kafka and His Precursors', *Labyrinths* (Harmondsworth, 1970), p.236.
26. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.3, p.474; Vol.10, p.85.
27. Ibid., p.396.
28. Ibid., pp.83–4.
29. Ibid., pp.88–111.
30. *Study*, p.452; Vol.8, p.10.
31. For a critique of the non-creativity of the nomad, see G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Mille Plateaux* (Paris, 1980), esp. pp.9–37, 434–527.
32. H.G. Wells, *A Short History of the World* (Harmondsworth, revised ed. 1946), pp.215–16, 219.
33. A. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol.12, *Reconsiderations* (London, 1961).
34. A. Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World* (London, 1973), pp.415, 417.
35. B. Lewis, 'Islamic Concepts of Revolution', in *Islam in History: Ideas, Men and Events in the Middle East* (London, 1973), pp.253–4.
36. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*, Vol.1, p.65.
37. Ibid., p.64; cf. M. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977), p.67.
38. Ibid., Vol.2, pp.135–7.

39. Lacoste, *Ibn Khaldun*, pp.65–78.
40. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*, Vol.1, pp.249–51; cf. Rosenthal, 'Introduction', p.lxxviii.
41. On the Bergsonian strain in Toynbee's thinking, see McNeill, *Arnold J. Toynbee*, pp.267–8.
42. F. Rosenthal, *Muqaddimah*, 'Introduction', pp.lxxviii–lxxx.
43. Ibid., p.lxxviii.
44. Ibn Khaldun, *Al-Ta'rif bi-Ibn Khaldun wa Rihlatuhu Gharban wa-Sharqan* (Cairo, c.1960), pp.357, 358.
45. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.1, pp.71n, 372; Vol.2, pp.144–8; Vol.4, pp.491–501; Vol.10, p.86.
46. Ibn Khaldun, *Ta'rif*, p.403.
47. Reprinted *The Collected Works of Thomas de Quincey*, ed. by D. Masson, Vol.7 (London, 1897), pp.368–426.
48. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.3, p.19.
49. Toynbee, *Study*, CK Vol.1, p.68; Vol.3, pp.7–50, 431–2, 394–454.
50. G. Jenkins, 'A Note on Climatic Cycles and the Rise of Chinggis Khan', *Central Asiatic Journal*, Vol.18 (1974), pp.217–26; Owen Lattimore, 'The geographical factor in Mongol history', *Geographical Journal*, Vol.91 (1938), pp.1–20; O.K. Spate, 'Reflections on Toynbee's "A Study of History": a Geographer's View', *Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand*, Vol.5, No.20, May 1953, pp.324–37.
51 E. Le Roi Ladurie, *Times of Feast, Times of Famine* (London, 1971), p.7.
52. O. Lattimore, *Manchuria: Cradle of Conflict* (New York, 1932); on Lattimore's life and more specifically his political affiliations, see Robert P. Newman, *Owen Lattimore and the Loss of China* (University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1992).
53. For a comparison of Confucian theories of cyclical history with that of Ibn Khaldun, see P. Crone, *Slaves on Horseback* (Cambridge, 1980), pp.89–91.
54. For Toynbee's use of Lattimore, see *inter alia*, *Study*, Vol.5, pp.315, 410, 449, 457–8; Vol.8, p.520.
55. O. Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History* (London, 1962), pp.27–8; Newman, *Owen Lattimore*, p.20.
56. McNeill, *Arnold J. Toynbee*, pp.98–9; Morton, *A Bibliography*, pp.227–8.
57. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah*, Vol.1, pp.144, 153.
58. Ibn Khaldun, *'Ibar*, Vol.5, p.369 tr. D. Ayalon, 'Mamlukiyyat (B) Ibn Khaldun's View of the Mamluk Phenomenon', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, Vol.2 (1980), p.345.
59. Toynbee, *Study*, Vol.4, pp.454–62.
60. Ibid., Vol.3, pp.32–3; Vol.7, p.29; Vol.10, p.234.
61. On the influence of Lybyer and on Toynbee's reluctance to accord to the Turks any originality, see Milton Gold, 'Toynbee on the Turks in the Near and Middle East', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1961), pp.77–99.
62. K. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (London, 1945), Vol.1, pp.49–52, 226–7, 230–2; E. Gellner, 'Flux and reflux in the faith of men' in idem, *Muslim Society*, pp.1–85.
63. On the limits of the Janissaries considered as an elite which transcended local factional interests, see K. Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708–1758* (Princeton, NJ, 1980), pp.89–97; H.L. Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760–1826* (Chapel Hill, 1963), pp.55–78; H. Inalcik, 'Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration', in T. Naff and R. Owen (eds.), *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History* (Carbondale, 1971), pp.27–52; A.K. Rafeq, 'The local forces in Syria in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', in Parry and Yapp, *War Technology and Society*, pp.277–307; M. Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, 1517–1798* (London, 1992), pp.22–4, 55–8.
64. C.P. Cavafy, *C.P. Cavafy. Collected Poems*, tr. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard (London, 1975), p.15.

IX

Eating Horses And Drinking Mare's Milk

The amīr Sayf al-Dīn Bashtak al-Nāṣirī came originally as a military slave (*mamlūk*) from the territory of the Mongon khān Ghiyāth al-Dīn Ọzbeg (Uzbak; 712–42/1312–41) of the Golden Horde in what is now southern Russia. Sayf al-Dīn was famous for his good looks; specifically, he was supposed to have resembled the Mongol ruler of Iran Abū Sā'īd (717–36/1317–35).[1] He was one of the grandest of the amīrs in Mamlūk Egypt and Syria during the third reign of Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalawūn (709–41/1310–41). He was famed for his wealth and his pride and maintained a great palace on the main Cairo thoroughfare, Bayn al-Qaṣrayn. According to the fifteenth-century chronicler Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī, he never sat down to dine without having at least fifty head of sheep and horses served to himself and his guests, as well as chicken and other foods.[2]

The amīr Sayf al-Dīn Qawṣūn al-Naṣīrī belonged to the same generation. Indeed it was he who had brought about Bashtak's downfall in 741/1341. He also was powerful and wealthy and, when he in turn fell from power later in the same year and his house was plundered, the price of gold in Cairo dropped because of the quantity coming onto the market. Qawṣūn had first arrived in Cairo as a merchant from the lands of the Golden Horde.[3] When, in 737/1336–37, he married a daughter of Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad fifty horses were consumed by the wedding guests.[4] Qawṣūn was, incidentally, one of the few amīrs known to have been able to write in the Mongol language.[5] In 732/1332, at the wedding of Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's son Anūk to a daughter of the amīr Baktīmūr al-Sāqī, horse meat was also among

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1 Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, 4 vols, Hyderabad 1929–32, I, 22. pp. 477–79; al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi'l-wafayāt*, 12 vols, Damascus, Istanbul and Wiesbaden 1931ff, X, p. 143.

2 Ibn Taghrībirdī, Yūsuf, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhira*, ed. G. al-Shayyāl and F.M. Shalṭūṭ, 16 vols, Cairo, 1929–78, X, p. 74.

3 Ibn Taghrībirdī, X, pp 44–46.

4 Al-Maqrīzī, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-ma'rifat duwal al-mulūk*, eds. M.M. Ziyāda and S.'A. 'Ashūr, 4 vols, 1934–73, II, p. 288.

5 Little, D.P., "Notes on Aitamiš, a Mongol Mamlūk," *Die islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Festchrift für Hans Robert Roemer zum 65. Geburstag* , eds. U. Haarmann and P. Bachmann, Beirut, 1979, p. 392.

the dishes served.[6] Finally, in 738/1337–38, at the festivities marking completion of the palaces of the amīrs Yalbughā and al-Maridānī, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad had twenty horses served up (along with larger quantities of sheep and oxen).[7]

It is at first a little surprising to find horse meat featuring so prominently in the diet of the Turkish *mamlūks* of the early fourteenth century, for almost to a man they belonged to the Ḥanafīte school of Islamic law. Whereas the Shāfi'ite school permits the eating of horses, Abū Ḥanīfa and Mālik ibn Anas forbade it. Adherents of the Ḥanafīte school were, however, not unanimous on the question; for example, the prominent traditionist Abū Yūsuf and others permitted eating horse meat.[8] Doubtless the *mamlūks* took advantage of this disagreement (*ikhtilāf*) to follow their own inclinations. Horse meat was evidently something of a luxury in early fourteenth-century Cairo. The fact that it was served at the marriages of both Qawṣūn and Baktīmūr's daughter suggests that it was particularly popular among *mamlūks* of Mongol origin. It is striking that all the feasts mentioned took place during the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who was, more than any other Mamluk sulṭān, famous for his passion for horses, horse races and horse breeding.[9] It is tempting to think that, when *mamlūks* of Qipchak Turkish or Mongol origins on the steppes feasted on horses in Egypt or Syria, they were consciously and ritualistically commemorating their origins in the culture of the steppes and imitating the ways of their pagan ancestors. There is, however, no direct evidence for such a conclusion, and, when Arab chroniclers recorded these feasts, the slaughter of horses was simply mentioned in passing, together with the slaughter of oxen, sheep and chickens. It was the extravagance of *mamlūk* feasting, rather than its hypothetical atavism, that the Arabs found noteworthy.

Eating horse meat was not restricted to the *mamlūk* elite. Simone Sigoli, an Italian who was in Alexandria in 785–86/1384, noted that one could buy horse meat, as well as camel and donkey meat, in that city.[10] More striking, in the 1290s large numbers of pagan Oirat Mongols, fleeing famine and warfare in Iran, found their way into Mamlūk lands; they were settled in 695/1296 in the seedy and impoverished Ḥusaynīya quarter of Cairo. There they shocked their Muslim neighbours by their habit of tying down horses and bludgeoning them around the head before eating them. The probable implication of this report is that, instead

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[6] 'Aynī, *Tarikh al-Badr fi awsāf ahl al-'aṣr*, British Library, inv. No. Add 22360, fol. 30a; al-Maqrīzī, II, p. 346.

[7] Al-Maqrīzī, II, p. 453.

[8] Ibn Rushd, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, *Bidāyat al-mujtahid wa-nihāyat al-muqtaṣid*, 2 vols, Cairo, 1938, I, p. 544.

[9] Irwin, R., *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382*, Beckenham, U.K., 1986, pp. 114–116.

[10] Simone Sigoli, *Viaggio al Monte Sinai di Simone Sigoli*, Milan, 1841, p. 80.

of slitting the animals' throats in the manner prescribed by Islamic law, the Oirats, following the practice of their kinsmen on the steppes, took pains to kill them without shedding their blood.[11] There seems to have been no special significance attached to consumption of horse meat at the Mamlūk court, but that was not always the case for kumiss (*qūmiz*, fermented mare's milk). Often, it is true, *qūmiz* was drunk for pleasure. For example, the Sulṭān al-Ẓāhir Baybars I (658–76/1260–77) was very fond of it and was especially generous to his entourage on the days that he drank it. He probably died from the bad effects of drinking *qūmiz* while watching a polo match in Damascus in 676/1277.[12] (It is perhaps worth noting that the Ḥanafīte school does not consider spirits to fall under the same ban as wine.) The practice of drinking *qūmiz* at the Mamlūk court seems to have died out during the fourteenth century, but it may have been deliberately revived by the Circassian Mamlūk Sulṭān al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (784–801/1382–99, with interruption) in an antiquarian attempt to return to an earlier form of court ritual. According to the chronicler Muḥammad Ibn Iyās, in *Ṣafar* 791/January/February 1389

> "the sulṭān began to drink *qūmiz*.... And the kings had a custom of doing that. The sulṭān gave orders that the amīrs should assemble every Wednesday and Sunday in the *maydān* below the citadel and drink *qūmiz*, and that was one of the rituals (*sha'a'ir*) of the realm."

The assembled amīrs were served their *qūmiz*, which, like spoiled milk, was sugared and therefore called *qara qūmiz*. The pages served it in Chinese bowls. Barqūq was, however, the last to observe this ceremony, which lapsed after his death.[13] It is possible that Barqūq and some of his predecessors used the regular assembly and drinking of *qūmiz* as an occasion to extract oaths of loyalty from their amīrs. It is noteworthy that the Turkish expression *and içmek* means both to drink and to swear.[14]

Muslim Mongols and Qipchak Turks in the lands of the Golden Horde shared the *mamlūks*' taste for horse meat and fermented mare's milk. In the early 1330s the North African globetrotter Muḥammad ibn Baṭṭūṭa travelled across the northern

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[11] Al-Maqrīzī, I., p. 812; cf Ayalon, D., "The Great *Yāsa* of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination," *Studia Islamica*, XXXIII, 1971, p. 111.

[12] Ibn Shaddād, 'Izz al-Dīn Muḥammad, *Ta'rīkh al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, Beirut, 1983, pp. 120, 222, 297; al-Yunīnī, *Dhayl mir`āt al-zamān*, 4 vols, Hyderabad, 1954–61, III, p. 245; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmi' al-ghurar*, vol. VIII, ed. U. Haarmann, Cairo, 1971, p. 208.

[13] Ibn Iyās, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, *Badā`i' al-ẓuhūr fī waqā``i' al-duhūr*, ed. M Muṣṭafā, 5 vols, Cairo, 1960–75 1/ 2, p. 393; cf. Ibn Iyās, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, *Badā`i' al-ẓuhūr fī waqā``i' al-duhūr*, 3 vols, Būlāq, 1311–12/1893–94, I, p. 269; Al-Maqrīzī, III/2, p. 590.

[14] Roux, J.P., "The Turkish and Mongolian Ritual of the Blood Oath," in *Mythologies*, ed. Y. Bonnefoy, 2 vols, 1991, II, p. 1112.

Caucasus. He noted that the Qipchak Turks in the region ate mainly horse meat and drank *qūmiz*. Indeed the *khatūn* of the Golden Horde offered him a bowl of *qūmiz*, an honour that he dared not refuse, though he disliked the taste. He visited the camp of Özbeg Khān at Bish Dagh in the Caucasus. After having attended a feast, he reported that the "food consists of boiled horse meat and mutton." He made no mention of *qūmiz* on that occasion, however. Rather, he claimed that the "beverage they make most use of is fermented liquor of honey, since being of the Ḥanafīte school of law, they hold fermented liquor to be lawful." Ibn Baṭṭūṭa went on to describe the way in which homage was pledged by the khān's kinsmen and courtiers with cups of such hydromel.[15]

Eating horse meat and drinking fermented mare's milk featured prominently in the festivities of the pagan Mongols and Turks across the steppes. It is reported that during the *Kuriltay* (Mongol assembly) called to approve the choice of Möngke (Mangū) as great khān in 649/1251:

> "the daily ration of drink and food was 2,000 wagon-loads of *qūmiz* and wine, 300 horses or oxen, and 3,000 sheep. And, as Berke (later the khān of the Golden Horde [655–65/1257–67], who had converted to Islam) was present, there was performed upon these the commandment 'Eat of that over which the name of God hath been pronounced' (Qur'ān 6:118)."[16]

Friar William of Rubruck, who was in Mongol territory in the 1250s, described in some detail the making of *qūmiz* and *qara qūmiz*. According to him, the latter was a clear mare's milk and was more highly regarded because it was made from the milk of imperial mares.[17]

The tradition-loving Chaghatay warriors in the service of the Muslim warlord Tīmūr (771–807/1370–1405) had similar tastes. The Spaniard Ruy González de Clavijo, who went on an embassy to Tīmūr in the first decade of the fifteenth century, noted that it was the custom of the Chaghatay aristocrats and warriors to get drunk on wine and fermented mare's milk before eating. Mare's milk sweetened with honey was called *busa*.[18] Horses were roasted whole, after the hair had been

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[15] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa A.D. 1325–1354* , II, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, Cambridge, 1962, pp. 474, 477, 481, 487, 495–96.

[16] Juvainī, 'Ala-ad-Din 'Ata-Malik, *The History of the World Conqueror*, trans. J.A. Boyle, 2 vols, Manchester, U.K. and Cambridge, Mass., 1958, II, p. 573.

[17] *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Mongke, 1253–1255*, eds. P. Jackson and D. Morgan, London 1990, pp. 81–82.

[18] Gonzalez de Clavijo, R., *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406*, trans. G. LeStrange, London, 1928, p. 245.

merely scraped away from the hides, and the meat served on great round leather trays.[19]

> "The joint that is most in favour with the [Chaghatay] Tartars is the croup of the horse, with the saddle meat attached but the leg disjointed off, and with portions of the same the servers would fill some ten of those gold and silver bowls or trenchers.... On these trenchers, too, they placed knots of the horse tripe in balls the size of a fist, with a sheep's head all of a piece."[20]

William of Rubruck made it clear, however, that the devotion of the pagan Mongols to horse meat and fermented mare's milk had more than merely gastronomic significance. According to him,

> "on the ninth day of the moon of May, moreover, they [the shamans] assemble all the white mares in the herd and consecrate them.....they sprinkle newly made *comos* on the ground and that day hold a great festival, as this is the occasion when they reckon on drinking new *comos* for the first time...."[21]

He also reported the funerary rites for a man for whom they had hung up between high poles sixteen horses' hides, four towards each quarter of the earth, and they had laid down *qūmiz* for him to drink and meat for him to eat...[22]Finally he noted that when Möngke and his Mongols were about to begin one of their drinking bouts they first sprinkled *qūmiz* on their felt idols.[23]

The Mongol khāns were accustomed to offering *qūmiz* to visiting envoys and others as a guarantee of safe-conduct. When, for example, in 661/1263 an embassy from the Mamlūk Sulṭān al-Ẓāhir Baybars presented itself to Berke, its members were first offered *qūmiz*.[24] When envoys from Mamlūk Egypt visited the court of Muḥammad Khudābanda Öljeytü (Uljāytū) of Iran in 704/1304-05 they were offered *qūmiz* from the hand of the ruler himself. A *qāḍī* (religious judge) accompanying the delegation refused the drink but accepted some bread as a sign of *aman* (safe-conduct) and performed the prostration that Öljeytü was expecting.[25]

The consumption of horse meat also played an important part in the rituals of the shamans of Central Asia and Siberia. When an Altaic shaman wished to ascend to the sky he used to sacrifice a horse, taking pains not to let any of its blood fall upon the ground. The skin and bones were then hung on a long pole while

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19 Gonzalez de Clavijo, p. 266.

20 Gonzalez de Clavijo, p. 224.

21 Rubruck, p. 242.

22 Rubruck, p. 96.

23 Rubruck, pp. 75, 222.

24 Ibn al-Dawādārī, p. 100.

25 Ibn al-Dawādārī, p. 127.

the shaman and his companions feasted ceremonially on the meat. On the second evening the shaman offered horse meat to spirits known as "masters of the drum" and distributed it to participants in the ritual. Sometimes the excited shaman would then begin his spiritual ascent to communicate with the spirits in the sky.[26] It is possible that the masters of the drum and their feasting on horse meat are the subject of some of the mysterious "Siyāh Qalam" paintings preserved in albums in the Topkapı Sarayı library in Istanbul.[27]

"The horse is man's inseparable companion in life as in death, and the principal animal sacrificed to the sky."[28] Horses had long figured in the funerary rituals of the steppe peoples. Sixty-nine horse cadavers were found in *kurgans* (tombs) excavated at Pazyryk in the Altai mountains and datable between the fourth and third centuries BC.[29] The practice of burying horses with their masters persisted into the age of the Qipchak Turks and the Mongols. Western observers of Mongol funerary practices noted the importance of horse sacrifice. Not only were horses buried with the dead man in order to provide him with mounts in the other world, but also, after the grave had been filled in, a "horse was ridden around until it dropped of exhaustion; its head was then washed in *kumys*, its bones and intestines removed, and a pole was thrust in at the belly and out through the mouth". It was offered as a sacrifice to Tengri, the sky god. In addition, the skins of a number of horses might be displayed over the grave. J.A. Boyle has argued that the Mongols borrowed this funerary practice from their Qipchak subjects and that it was slowly abandoned as the Mongols adopted Islam.[30]

The ceremonies of the Turks and the Mongols at the Mamlūk court in Cairo were often recorded without comprehension by their Arab contemporaries, and it is possible that the full significance of some of the court rituals escaped them (and modern scholars). The *mamlūks* who entered Egypt, however, were then thoroughly educated in the precepts of Islam, and there is no reason to doubt the genuineness

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[26] Eliade, M., *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, New York, 1964, pp. 190–194.

[27] On this group of paintings in general, see Grube, E.J. and Sims, E., eds., "Between China and Iran: Paintings from Four Istanbul Albums .....A Colloquy held 23–26 June 1980," *Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia* 10, London, 1985. For objections to assuming a shamanistic context for such scenes, see Rogers, J.M., "Siyah Qalam," in *Persian Masters: Five Centuries of Painting*, ed. S.R. Canby, Bombay, 1990, p. 27.

[28] Roux, J.P., "The Importance of Animals in the Religion of the Turks and Mongols: Tribal Myths and Hunting Rituals," in *Mythologies*, ed. Y. Bonnefoy, 2 vols, Chicago, 1991, II, p. 1098.

[29] Jankovich, M., *They rode into Europe: The Fruitful Exchange in the Arts of Horsemanship between East and West*, trans. A. Dent, London, 1971, p. 69; cf. Rolle, R., *The World of the Scythians*, London 1989, p. 109.

[30] Boyle, J.A., "A Form of Horse Sacrifice amongst the 13th- and 14th-Century Mongols," *Central Asiatic Journal*, X, 1965, pp. 145–50; cf. Barthold, V.V. and Rogers, J.M., "The Burial Rites of the Turks and the Mongols," *Central Asiatic Journal*, XIV, 1970, pp. 195–227.

of their conversion and their commitment. It is not suggested here that their consumption of horse meat and mare's milk reflected an obstinate attachment to pagan beliefs and practices. At most, it reflected an innocuous nostalgia for the ways and tastes of nomadic life that they had known as children on the steppes.

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X

Usamah ibn Munqidh: An Arab-Syrian Gentleman at the Time of the Crusades Reconsidered

It is possible that it is only those who have something to hide who write their autobiographies. This thought is prompted by a consideration of the life of Usamah ibn Munqidh. Usamah (the name means 'lion') was born on 25 June 1095. A few months later, on 27 November, Pope Urban II preached the First Crusade to those assembled for the Council of Clermont. The unexpected success of the First Crusade led to the establishment of the kingdom of Jerusalem. On 4 July 1187 King Guy of Lusignan and the army of the kingdom of Jerusalem went down to defeat at the hands of Saladin at the battle of Hattin. In the aftermath of that battle the greater part of the kingdom of Jerusalem was reoccupied by the Muslims. On 6 November 1188 Usamah ibn Munqidh, by then a pensioner of the mighty Saladin, died in Damascus at the age of ninety-three. His life had been more or less coterminous with the existence of the twelfth-century kingdom of Jerusalem.

Usamah was born at Shayzar, a small town on a spur of rock above the River Orontes in north-west Syria. He grew up in a region which in the middle ages was thickly wooded and which included areas of marshland and cane brakes, full of lions, gazelles and wild boars – ideal territory for the princely pursuit of hunting.[1] Usamah's father, a keen huntsman, was a member of the Banu Munqidh, the ruling clan of Shayzar.[2] Although the Banu Munqidh princes of Shayzar were Muslims, the majority of their subjects seem to have

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[1] On Usamah as hunter, see R. Smith, 'A New Translation of Certain Passages of the Hunting Section of Usamah ibn Munqidh's *I'tibar*', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 26 (1981), pp. 235-55.

[2] On the Banu Munqidh in general, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd edn), s.v. 'Munkidh, Banu' (R.S. Humphreys).

been eastern Christians.[3] Once he had reached maturity, Usamah spent very little time in his birth-place. Instead he was to pursue a career in politics and soldiering in Mosul, Damascus, Egypt, and Hisn Kayfa.

Usamah, who was uniquely well-placed to give an account of the crusaders in the Near East, wrote what has been described (somewhat loosely) as an autobiography.[4] So many of the medieval sources to which one turns in the hope that they will shed a new and vivid light on the lives and attitudes of the Christians in the kingdom of Jerusalem turn out to be parsimonious with human details. Therefore by contrast the apparent simplicity, transparency and liveliness of Usamah's memoirs make them very seductive. Ever since Hartvig Derenbourg discovered the manuscript in the Escorial Library in 1880, Usamah's book has been much quoted by modern historians of the crusades in order to illustrate aspects of Muslim-Christian relations in the twelfth century. For example, this passage:

> When I used to visit Nablus [a small town, at that time part of the kingdom of Jerusalem] I always took lodging with a man named Mu'izz, whose home was a lodging house for the Moslems. The house had windows which opened to the road, and there stood opposite to it on the other side of the road a house belonging to a Frank who sold wine for the merchants. He would take some wine in a bottle and go around announcing it by shouting, 'So and so, the merchant, has just ordered a cask full of this wine. He who wants to buy some of it will find it in such and such a place.' The Frank's pay for the announcement made would be the wine in that bottle. One day this Frank went home and found a man with his wife in the same bed. He asked him, 'What could have made thee enter into my wife's room?' The man replied, 'I was tired, so I went in to rest.' 'But how', asked he, 'didst thou get into my bed?' The other replied, 'I found a bed that was spread, so I slept in it.' 'But', said he, 'my wife was sleeping together with thee!' The other replied, 'Well, the bed is hers. How could I therefore have prevented her from using her own bed?' 'By the truth of my religion', said the husband, 'if thou shouldst do it again,

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[3] On the good relations of the Banu Munqidh with their Christian subjects, see E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la croisade: idéologie et propagande dans les réactions musulmanes aux croisades* (Paris, 1968), p. 18.

[4] The text and translation of the *I'tibar* cited here are *Kitab al-I'tibar*, ed. H. al-Zayn (Beirut, 1988) [to be cited as *I'tibar*] and *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades: Memoirs of Usamah ibn-Munqidh*, trans. P.K. Hitti (New York, 1929) [to be cited as *Memoirs*]. H. Derenbourg's study of the life and works, *Ousama ibn Mounkidh, un émir syrien au premier siècle des croisades*, 2 vols (Paris, 1889-93) remains unsurpassed in many respects.

thou and I should have a quarrel.' Such was for the Frank the entire expression of his disapproval and the limit of his jealousy.[5]

Moreover with its plethora of nostalgic hunting stories, Usamah's book can be seen as a distinguished oriental precursor of the writings of Robert Surtees and Siegfried Sassoon. Of course, simplicity and humour are always seductive, but students of the crusades have learned to their cost that those 'simple' and lively memoirs written by Robert of Clari, Geoffrey of Villehardouin and Jean of Joinville are not at all what they seem at first sight: none of these sources is really simple. Indeed, a distressing number of medieval sources, once they have been expertly examined by an academic eye, turn out to be exercises in special pleading, full of rhetoric, slander, misdirection and evasion. Why should Usamah's book be any different? At the very least his highly literary work needs to be read within its specific literary context – for it is certain that he was not writing to provide twentieth-century infidel historians with accurate documentary information about Christian-Muslim relations in the twelfth century.

His book, the *Kitab al-I'tibar*, is not in fact exactly an autobiography. The book does not plod from schooldays to maturity to old age, nor does it give a coherent account of the political and military matters in which Usamah was a protagonist. Instead it leaps from anecdote to anecdote and it soon becomes obvious that Usamah has reshaped his life in such a way that those who come after him may learn from those anecdotes. *I'tibar* means learning by example. To medieval Arabs this word and cognate words, such as *'ibra* (warning) and *mu'tabar* (object lesson) had a religious resonance. From the Koran they learnt about the fate of those pre-Islamic dynasties to whom God had sent prophets but who ignored the warnings of those prophets and were consequently destroyed. 'In their story was a warning for those with understanding' (Koran XII.111). And 'So take warning those who have sight!' (Koran LIX. 2). Usamah was steeped in the Koran and knew its text by heart. (His father was, if anything, even better acquainted with the book, having copied it out fifty-nine times.)

The themes of *I'tibar* and *'ibra* were popular in medieval Arabic literature. They are prominent in *The Thousand and One Nights*. In the story of 'The City of Brass', when the exploring party, sent by the caliph to find the jinns imprisoned by Solomon in bottles in the desert, arrive at the Black Castle, the ruined place of a people damned and destroyed by God, we learn that *huwa*

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[5] *I'tibar*, p. 124; *Memoirs*, pp. 164-5.

'ibrah li-man i 'tibara, that is 'it is a warning to whoso would be warned'.[6] Indeed, the themes of vanished and doomed peoples of 'Ad, Thamoud and Pharaoh – and of learning from the example of past lives is the subject of the exordium which prefaces the entire story collection of *The Thousand and One Nights*. 'Let him who knows how to reflect reflect and draw instruction from what he has read.'[7]

Usamah's book is not then just a random grab-bag of everything a slightly senile and rambling old man could remember. It was a book which sought to teach by example and Usamah had specific students in mind – his own progeny. The sole surviving manuscript of the *Kitab al-I'tibar* (transcribed in 1213) includes an *'ijaza* for the book granted by Usamah's son, Murhaf to Murhaf's grandson.[8]

The run of the narrative in the *Kitab al-I'tibar* is guided by likenesses and antitheses which have struck the author. As far as likeness is concerned, Usamah, having finished one tale, will often remark that 'the following case is somewhat similar'. Antitheses are even more important. Usamah suggests that Frankish justice in the kingdom of Jerusalem is bizarre and awful by giving a colourful account of a brutal trial by combat.[9] But Frankish justice is also good and Usamah refers to a case which he himself won in a Frankish court.[10] Frankish medicine is lethally dreadful. Usamah narrates the story of a woman who died after being treated to a trepanation by a Christian doctor. But Frankish medicine is also good. Their practice of washing infected wounds with vinegar works and their use of glasswort as a cure for scrofula is similarly effective.[11] A bad Frank tried to stop Usamah in the Temple area of Jerusalem from praying in the direction of Mecca. A good Frank, very likely a Templar, intervened to protect Usamah.[12] A lion may be an easy creature to kill. On the other hand, Usamah almost died from the attack of an hyena.[13] He has known men more cowardly than women and women braver than

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[6] D. Pinault, *Story-Telling Techniques in the Arabian Nights* (Leiden, 1992), p. 198.

[7] *The Thousand and One Nights (Alf Layla wa-Layla) From the Earliest Known Sources*, ed. M. Mahdi (Leiden, 1984), p. 56; *The Arabian Nights*, trans. H. Haddawy (New York, 1990), p. 2.

[8] *Memoirs*, pp. 17, 255. (The text of the *'ijaza* is omitted in al-Zayn's edition of the text).

[9] *I'tibar*, p. 126; *Memoirs*, pp. 167-8.

[10] *I'tibar*, p. 66; *Memoirs*, pp. 93-4.

[11] *I'tibar*, pp. 121-2; *Memoirs*, pp. 162-3.

[12] *I'tibar*, p. 123; *Memoirs*, pp. 163-4.

[13] *I'tibar*, p. 131; *Memoirs*, pp. 173-4.

men.[14] To take a final example and one that is closest of all to the central theme of his book, Usamah has seen a man pierced right through by a lance and survive: on the other hand, he has seen another die from the prick of a needle.[15] There are those, like Usamah, who plunged into the thick of every battle and who yet still live. Others took every precaution but could not escape their doom. These are matters to marvel over, but it is God who disposes all things.

Antithesis was similarly an important way of organizing material in *The Thousand and One Nights*. In a ninth-century fragment of the manuscript, we find:

> And when it was the following night said Dinazad 'O my delectable one [i.e. Sheherezade], if you are not asleep relate to me the tale you promised me and quote striking examples of the excellencies and shortcomings, the cunning and stupidity, the generosity and avarice, the courage and cowardice that are in man.'[16]

Usamah's *Kitab al-I'tibar* is (like so many stories in *The Thousand and One Nights*) an account of fate. Man cannot prolong or shorten his life by his own deeds. It is God who determines all things and victory in battle comes from Him, not from planning. Usamah's fatalism of course derived in part from the Koran. But the Koran was not the only source. Fatalism was also a leading characteristic of pre-Islamic poetry in the Hejaz.[17] Usamah was steeped in pre-Islamic poetry. According to the chronicler and biographer al-Dhahabi, 'he knew over 20,000 verses of pre-Islamic poetry by heart'.[18] In the course of the *Kitab al-I'tibar* Usamah quoted from the ancient Arab poets, Antarah ibn Shaddad and Sahl ibn Shayban.[19] Like the creations of those poets, Usamah's treatise is to some extent an exercise in *fakhr* (boasting). Usamah's sensibility and, more specifically, his perception of warfare were shaped by the poets of sixth- and seventh-century Arabia, rather than by treatises on *jihad* (holy war). Even in the concluding panegyric to Saladin, Usamah does not mention the word *jihad* – though, as we shall see, there may be further reasons for Usamah's lack of enthusiasm for the idea of *jihad*.

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[14] *I'tibar*, pp. 117-18; *Memoirs*, pp. 157-9.

[15] *I'tibar*, p. 47; *Memoirs*, p. 70.

[16] N. Abbott, 'A Ninth-Century Fragment of the "Thousand Nights": New Light on the Early History of the Arabian Nights', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8 (1949), p. 133.

[17] On pre-Islamic fatalism, see W. Caskel, *Das Schicksal in der altarabischen Poesie* (Leipzig, 1926); H. Ringgren, *Studies in Arabian Fatalism* (Uppsala and Wiesbaden, 1955).

[18] Al-Dhahabi, *Tarikh al-Islam*, cited in Derenbourg, *Ousama*, 1.595.

[19] *I'tibar*, pp. 44, 53-4; *Memoirs*, pp. 66-7, 78.

Modelled as it is on bold, pre-Islamic bedouin exemplars, Usamah's book seems full of vigour, courage, flashing swords and triumphant encounters with the enemy. More closely read, however, it is one of the saddest books ever written – a medieval version of *Gone With the Wind.* Usamah himself is his own *mu'tabar*, or object lesson. Too weak to hold a pen, when once he had held a lance, he dictates his book. He is half blind and reluctantly alive, the out-of-favour pensionary of Saladin. Usamah has outlived both his strength and his times and he sadly contemplates his shrinking body lolling like a maid on stuffed cushions in Damascus.[20] He has tried so many times to lose his life in battle, but God would not allow him. He looks back above all to the days when he was young and his father was still alive and he followed his father on the hunt for lions in the forests and swamps around Shayzar.

In medieval Islamic culture longevity conferred an almost religious distinction upon a man. Anyone who lived to the age of forty or beyond was reckoned one of the *mu'amirun* or macrobiots. Al-Dhahabi and Ibn Hajar devoted biographical dictionaries to this category of person. According to a saying of the Prophet Muhammad, the longer a man lived past the age of forty the greater was Allah's esteem for him.

The longevity attributed in both the Bible and Islamic tradition to patriarchs like Noah and Abraham is evidence of the reverence traditionally accorded to old age. Nevertheless, it was recognized that longevity could be too much of a good thing. According to another saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, he is alleged to have prayed to God to preserve him from decrepitude and senility. Islamic lore envisaged a phase of life known as *mu'tarak al-manaya*, 'the battleground of fated doom' which one entered at around the age of seventy.[21] Usamah himself recognized that there was really something rather peculiar about someone who had passed through 'the battleground of fated doom' unscathed and he wrote that: 'Destiny seems to have forgotten me, so that I am like an exhausted camel left by the caravan in the desert.'[22] Very likely he lifted this image from the pre-Islamic poet, Zuhayr, who had compared himself in old age to a night-blind camel.[23] It was certainly a stock image.

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[20] *I'tibar*, pp. 144-5; *Memoirs*, pp. 190-2.

[21] On longevity and 'the battleground of fated doom', see L. Conrad, 'Seven and the *Tasbi'*: On the Implications of Numerical Symbolism for the Study of Medieval Islamic History', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 31 (1988), pp. 57-62.

[22] *I'tibar*, p. 147; *Memoirs*, p. 195.

[23] R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Cambridge, 1930), p. 118.

Turning now to what Usamah tells us about himself, although the *Kitab al-I'tibar* is hardly about anything except Usamah, in some senses he tells us very little. His memories of his early years in Shayzar are mostly of perilous encounters with Franks and wild animals. But he has the traditional Arab compunction against talking about love, women or even children. Usamah does not indulge in introspection and there is not really much sense of an 'I'. There are more flagrant evasions. (For example, he passes very easily over the incident when he, at the age of ten, stabbed and killed one of his father's retainers in a quarrel over the punishment of a servant-boy.[24]) From 1127 to 1138 Usamah was in service of Zanki, the atabak of Mosul and chief protagonist of the *jihad* against the crusader states. In 1138 he returned briefly to Shayzar. His father, who had previously renounced the lordship of Shayzar to his youngest brother, had died in 1137; Usamah has nothing to say about his being disinherited in this manner.

In 1138 Usamah was expelled from Shayzar by his uncle. He does not tell us why, merely remarking that 'conditions now made it necessary for me to start for Damascus'.[25] It is from other sources that we learn that Usamah's uncle, the ruling prince of Shayzar, 'Izz al-Din Abu'l-Asakir Sultan, was afraid for the safety of his small sons at the hands of Usamah and his brothers, all of whom were older than Sultan's children.[26] Usamah's account of the time he spent in Damascus under the patronage of Mu'in al-Din Unur, the *mamluk* Turkish general who was the effective ruler of that city, is both evasive and extremely brief.[27] However, in sections of the book devoted to Franks and to hunting, we find clues. In the 1130s and 40s Usamah visited the kingdom of Jerusalem on a number of occasions. Sometimes, he was engaged in ransoming Muslim captives.[28] But we also have anecdotes about Mu'in al-Din Unur in the kingdom and how a Frank wanted to show Mu'in al-Din a picture of the baby Jesus.[29] Then there is a reference to William of Bures accompanying Mu'in al-Din and Usamah from Acre to Tiberias.[30] On another occasion when Mu'in a-Din and Usamah were en route for Jerusalem they stopped off in

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[24] *I'tibar*, p. 132; *Memoirs*, pp. 174-5.

[25] *I'tibar*, p. 11; *Memoirs*, p. 28.

[26] Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi'l-tarikh*, ed. C.J. Tornberg, 14 vols (Leiden, 1851-76), 11.124-5; Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn fi akhbar al-dawlatayn*, ed. M.H.M. Ahmad, vol. 1, pts 1 and 2 (Cairo, 1956-62), 1:1.281-2.

[27] *I'tibar*, pp. 11-12; *Memoirs*, pp. 28-9.

[28] *I'tibar*, pp. 80-1; *Memoirs*, pp. 110-12.

[29] *I'tibar*, p. 123; *Memoirs*, p. 164.

[30] *I'tibar*, p. 125; *Memoirs*, p. 166.

Nablus.[31] On yet another occasion he refers to himself flying hawks with King Fulk near Acre.[32] It is clear then that Usamah spent some time together with the governor of Damascus in Frankish territory in the early 1140s. It is clear too from other sources that, for all Usamah's perfunctory cursing of the Franks, he and his patron were architects in a pact which allied Damascus with the kingdom of Jerusalem. In 1138 Mu'in al-Din sent Usamah to negotiate joint operations with the kingdom of Jerusalem against Muslim Banyas and the following year the two parties joined forces in the siege of that place.[33] No wonder Usamah never mentions the word *jihad* in the *I'tibar*.

Then in 1144 'certain causes made it necessary for me to depart for Egypt'.[34] He does not tell us why he had to leave or why he chose Egypt as his destination. However, we know from another source that Usamah had become very unpopular in Damascus as an intriguer and that he was ordered to leave by his former patron, Mu'in al-Din.[35] As for the choice of destination, Egypt in the early twelfth century was still ruled by the Shi'ite Fatimid caliphs. Usamah's clan, the Banu Munqidh, may themselves have been Shi'ites.[36] It should be noted, however, that they were probably Twelver Shi'ites, whereas the Fatimid caliphs were leaders of Sevener Shi'ism. Another reason that Usamah ibn Munqidh never refers to *jihad* may be that according to strict Shi'ite doctrine, this duty is in abeyance until the Last Days, when the

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[31] *I'tibar*, p. 127; *Memoirs*, p. 168.

[32] *I'tibar*, p. 169; *Memoirs*, p. 226.

[33] On Mu'in al-Din 'Unur, the Frankish alliance and joint operations against Banyas, see J. Prawer, *Histoire du royaume latin de Jérusalem*, trans. G. Nahon, 2 vols (Paris, 1969-70), 1.327-8, 334. In an anecdote about a deacon setting a tent-church on fire of which Usamah says that he was the eye-witness, there seems to be the implication that he was one of those Muslims from Damascus who had joined with the Franks in the attack on Banyas in 1140. See *I'tibar*, p. 84; *Memoirs*, pp. 115-16.

[34] *I'tibar*, p. 11; *Memoirs*, p. 28.

[35] Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl tarikh Dimashq*, ed. H.F. Amedroz (Leiden, 1908), pp. 277-8; Derenbourg, *Ousama*, 1.196-8.

[36] On the probable Shi'ism of Usamah (and of his kinsman, the Shi'ite historian, 'Ali ibn Munqidh), see C. Cahen, *Orient et Occident au temps des croisades* (Paris, 1983), pp. 81-2, 263 n. 31. It seems possible that the Banu Munqidh, like their allies, the Banu 'Ammar clan of Apamea, were all Shi'ites. The Shi'i historian, Ibn Abi Tayyi, cited in al-Dhahabi, says that he was acquainted with Usamah, and that he was a Shi'i (extracted in Derenbourg, *Ousama*, 1.602). According to Ibn Zafir, Usamah's enemies in Egypt 1153 were Sunnis; see Jamal al-Din 'Ali ibn Zafir, *Akhbar al-Duwal al-Munqati'a*, ed. A. Ferre (Paris, 1971), p. 104.

Hidden Imam will emerge from occultation and bring justice and victory to the true Muslims.[37]

Usamah had already had some dealings with the regime in Egypt. In 1139 he had used honeyed words to Ridwan, a former vizier in Egypt, who had escaped and joined Zanki's retinue in northern Syria. Usamah talked him into returning to Egypt where Ridwan was promptly imprisoned and then killed. Ridwan's head was tossed into his wife's lap, while people on the streets of Cairo ate his flesh, hoping thereby to acquire his courage. Usamah piously comments: 'His case was an object lesson for learning by example (*mu'tabar*) and a warning, but the divine will must be executed.'[38] An object lesson indeed, but perhaps the lesson should be to not trust the words of Usamah.

At all events, in 1144 Usamah arrived in Cairo. He was welcomed by Ibn Salar, the vizier at that time and as vizier the real power in the land. Ibn Salar gave Usamah a house and an income.[39] Although Ibn Salar was nominally the servant of the Shi'ite Fatimid caliph, he was in fact a Kurd and like most Kurds a Sunni Muslim. He was hoping for an alliance with the Sunni Muslim ruler of Damascus, Nur al-Din (Zanki's son who had succeeded him in 1146). Such an alliance would help to protect Fatimid Egypt from crusader aggression. Ibn Salar was particularly anxious to defend the important Fatimid port of Ascalon on the southern coast of Palestine from the armies of the kingdom of Jerusalem. (As it turned out the murder of Ibn Salar was speedily followed by the Christian conquest of that place.) Usamah presents himself as a distant and disinterested witness of this murder.[40] Other sources however suggest that Usamah was a prime mover in the plot against his former patron. In 1153 Ibn Salar had sent several emirs off to assist in the defence of Ascalon. One of the leaders was a man called 'Abbas. Another was Usamah. As they were heading out towards war-torn Palestine, 'Abbas lamented the easy life he was leaving behind in Cairo. Usamah then seized the opportunity to suggest that 'Abbas could do something about it. He could remove Ibn Salar from power and become vizier himself. Usamah worked on 'Abbas until he agreed. Then 'Abbas's son, Nasr ibn 'Abbas, was sent back into Egypt to secretly make his

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[37] On Shi'i doctrines regarding *jihad*, R. Peters, '*Djihad*: War of Aggression or Defence?' in *Akten des VII Kongresses fur Arabistik and Islamwissenschaft, Göttingen, 15. bis 22. August 1974*, ed. A. Dietrich (Göttingen, 1976), p. 284; M. Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam* (New Haven and London, 1985), p. 180; H. Halm, *Shi'ism* (Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 57-8.

[38] *I'tibar*, pp. 34-7; *Memoirs*, pp. 55-9; Derenbourg, *Ousama*, 1.178-81, 210-12.

[39] *I'tibar*, p. 13; *Memoirs*, p. 30; Ibn Zafir, *Akhbar*, p. 102; Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-Mawa'iz wa'l-I'tibar*, 2 vols (Bulaq, 1853-54), 2.55.

[40] *I'tibar*, pp. 24-5; *Memoirs*, pp. 42-4.

way into Ibn Salar's residence. Things went as planned and Nasr ibn 'Abbas did succeed in secretly entering Cairo and killing Ibn Salar.[41]

In doing so, he seems to have been helped by the Caliph al-Zafir, a dissolute young man who had been chafing under the old vizier's tutelage. 'Abbas returned to take over the vizierate and Usamah returned with him. The close-beset garrison of Ascalon were left to defend themselves as best they could. However, Usamah was still unable to rest, though once again he presents himself as the disinterested bystander of the bloody events he had actually instigated.[42] The Caliph al-Zafir and the assassin, Ibn 'Abbas, were both good-looking young men and there were rumours that they were fond of one another. The caliph had also allegedly made threats against Usamah. Usamah was further concerned that the caliph was trying to turn Ibn 'Abbas against his father. So he went to 'Abbas and told him that people were saying that al-Zafir was doing to Ibn 'Abbas 'what one does to a woman'. Usamah urged that the caliph should be killed in order to expunge the threat to 'Abbas's honour. 'Abbas summoned his son and told him what must be done in order to salvage the family pride. Then, when the Caliph al-Zafir turned up to dine with Ibn 'Abbas attended by only one slave, he was murdered by his host. 'Abbas, as vizier, immediately ordered a phony inquiry to be made, which led to the arrest and execution of al-Zafir's brothers. 'Abbas then put an infant scion of the Fatimid line on the throne, intending to use the child as a catspaw for his own rule.[43]

However, 'Abbas and his son and Usamah were by now so unpopular that they were soon forced to flee Egypt. Al-Zafir's sister wrote to certain Templars who now were based in Ascalon offering them 60,000 dinars if they could deliver to her 'Abbas and his murderous son. 'Abbas and his retinue were ambushed at Muwaylih by a Christian force from Ascalon. 'Abbas was killed,

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[41] Ibn Zafir, *Akhbar*, p. 103; Ibn Khallikan, *Biographical Dictionary*, trans. M. de Slane, 4 vols (Paris, 1842-71), 1.177, 3.352; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, 11.122; Ibn Taghribirdi, *Al-Nujum al-zahira*, ed. M. al-Burhami Mansur and A.L. al-Saiyid, 12 vols (Cairo, 1929-56), 5.309. C. Cahen, 'Quelques chroniques anciennes relatives aux derniers Fatimids', *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 37 (1937), p. 19 n.; *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd edn), s.v. ''Abbas b. Abi'l-Futuh' (C.H. Becker - S.M. Stern); N. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din, un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des croisades (511-569AH/1118-1174)*, 3 vols (Damascus, 1967), 2.446.

[42] *I'tibar*, pp. 25-7; *Memoirs*, pp. 44-6.

[43] Ibn Zafir, *Akhbar*, pp. 104-5; Ibn Khallikan, *Biographical Dictionary*, 3.426; Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, 11.126; Ibn Taghribirdi, *Nujum*, 5.288-9, 293, 309; Maqrizi, *Mawa'iz*, 2.30; Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din*, 2.496.

and Ibn 'Abbas was sent in a cage to Cairo. There he lost his nose and his ears to the wives of the murdered caliph before he was crucified. Usamah and his servants somehow avoided any harm in this ambush and Usamah even came away with a saddle cloth which he claims 'Abbas had illicitly taken from him earlier. Usamah sententiously observes that God had not allowed 'Abbas and his son to profit from the example of their slaughtered predecessor, Ridwan.[44] The new vizier in Egypt, Tala'i' ibn Ruzzik, was an old comrade in arms of Usamah's and a fellow enthusiast for poetry. It may be that Usamah and his retinue owed their escape from the Muwaylih ambush to this old friendship. In any case, once Usamah was safely installed in Damascus, Tala'i' sought to use him as an intermediary in his dealings with Nur al-Din (the ruler of Damascus since 1154). A lengthy correspondence in verse ensued, in which Tala'i' put forward the case for joint Egypto-Syrian operations against the Franks in the kingdom of Jerusalem, while Usamah, responding on behalf of his new patron, temporized, for Nur al-Din was not yet ready for a major offensive against the kingdom.[45]

Usamah had returned to Damascus in the year that that city opened its gates to Nur al-Din, Mu'in al-Din's old enemy, and for some years Usamah seems to have been based there. For some of the time he worked as a poet-propagandist for Nur al-Din. At some time in the early 1160s, Usamah left Damascus to reside in Hisn Kayfa, which was then ruled by the Artukid prince Qara Arslan.[46] Usamah does not give any reasons for this move. It may be significant that he did not return to Damascus until after the death of Nur al-Din. But perhaps Hisn Kayfa was chosen as a place for meditation in retirement, for by then Usamah was quite old and he seems to have spent most of his time there writing books and communing with ascetics. In 1174 he was invited back to Damascus by Saladin who had taken over the city after Nur al-Din's death.

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[44] *I'tibar*, pp. 29-33; *Memoirs*, pp. 48-54.

[45] *I'tibar*, pp. 32, 39; *Memoirs*, pp. 52, 60; Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdataayn*, 1:1.247-8, 266-8, 288-98, 311; Prawer, *Royaume*, 1.413; Sivan, *L'Islam et la croisade*, pp. 80-1.

[46] The last occasion Usamah is mentioned in the service of Nur al-Din is during Nur al-Din's abortive attack on Harim in 557/1162, when Usamah, despite his great age, fought valiantly. See Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil*, 11.187-8. Derenbourg (*Ousama*, 1.305-9) appears to be in error in having Usamah participate in Nur al-Din's subsequent and more successful attack on Harim in 1164. Usamah makes no reference to his move to Hisn Kayfa in the main text of the *I'tibar*, although some of the appended tales dealing with religious folk evidently derive from the period of his residence there.

Usamah's son, Murhaf, had won Saladin's favour and it seems that it was Murhaf who 'extricated him from the teeth of calamities in Hisn Kayfa'.[47]

Philip K. Hitti, the translator of the *Kitab al-I'tibar* into English, tells us in his introduction that Usamah was high in the councils of Saladin and was given Beirut to govern, but that, having been given this key post, he surrendered it to the Franks.[48] This cannot be right. Beirut was only captured by the Muslims in 1187 and surrendered to the Franks in 1197. Usamah would have been in his 90s when he was allegedly given this key posting and, of course, dead before he could have got around to surrendering the place. In fact, it is clear if one looks at Hitti's source, a chronicle written by the Lebanese historian, Salih ibn Yahya, that it was another Usamah, a moderately well-known Muslim pirate, who governed Beirut and surrendered it to the Franks in 1197.[49] There is no evidence that Usamah ibn Munqidh and Saladin were ever particularly close and in 1176 they fell out – over what is not clear. The final page or so of rhymed and highly rhetorical prose in the main text of the *Kitab al-I'tibar* seems to be pitched as a sort of begging letter with the aim of regaining Saladin's favour.[50]

The world Usamah was preparing to take his leave of in the 1180s was very different from the one he had grown up in. The politically complex patchwork of little Syrian principalities, some ruled by Sunnis, some by Shi'is, some by Arabs and some by Turks had vanished utterly. So too had the free and easy contacts with Frankish neighbours. Instead, all Syria and Egypt were united under a warlord who was dourly dedicated to prosecuting a *jihad* against the

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[47] Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn*, 1:2.676-7. It is also a curious feature of the *I'tibar* that although Usamah and the Ayyubid Sultan Saladin were, for a while at least, on friendly terms, the only reference to the latter is in the panegyric addressed to him which is tacked on to the main text of the *I'tibar*. (It is important not to confuse the Ayyubid sultan with Salah al-Din al-Yaghisiyani, an officer of Zanki's, who does make frequent appearances in the *I'tibar*.) Although the *I'tibar* in its final form must have been dictated in Damascus in the early 1180s when Usamah was aged about 90 in *hijri* years (q.v. *I'tibar*, p. 144; *Memoirs*, p. 90), its contents suggest that most of the main text must have been composed much earlier – perhaps as early as the 1160s. This may account for the brevity of his account of his second sojourn in Damascus, his lack of interest in Nur al-Din's and, later, Saladin's achievements in the prosecution of the *jihad*, his failure to refer to his own prowess during the siege of Harim in 1162 and his failure even to mention Qara Arslan, his host in Hisn Kayfa.

[48] *Memoirs* (Introduction), p. 11.

[49] Salih ibn Yahya, *Tarikh Bayrut*, ed. F. Hours and K. Salibi (Beirut, 1969), p. 20. (In a note, the editors of this text distinguish between 'Izz al-Din Usamah ibn Munqidh, the pirate, and Mu'ayyad al-Din Usamah ibn Munqidh, the author of the *I'tibar*.)

[50] Derenbourg, *Ousama*, 1.402-3.

last remnants of the crusader states. The age of intrigue and appeasement was over (for a time at least).

The *Kitab al-I'tibar* is not the only work by Usamah to have survived. He also compiled the *Kitab al-Manazil wa'l-Diyar* (The Book of Campsites and Abodes), a collection of poems on the traditional bedouin themes of abandoned campsites, lost homeland, lost loves and nostalgia.[51] Some of the best poems in the anthology are by Usamah himself. In a preface, written in highly coloured rhymed prose, he refers to the great earthquake in northern Syria in August 1157 in which an estimated 10,000 died:

> I was moved to compose this volume by the destruction which has overcome my country and my birthplace. For time has spread the hem of its robe over it and is striving with all its might and power to annihilate it. All the villages have been levelled to the ground: all the inhabitants perished: the dwelling has become but a trace and joys have been transformed into sorrows and misfortunes. I stopped there after the earthquake which destroyed it ... and I did not find my house, nor the house of my father and brothers, nor the houses of my uncles and my uncles' sons, nor of my clan.

In fact almost the entire Banu Munqidh clan had assembled in the castle of Shayzar in the summer of 1157 for a party to celebrate the circumcision of the son of the ruling prince and they perished in the ruins of the castle. Usamah continues: 'Sorely troubled I called upon Allah in this great trial ... and I sought consolation in composing this book ... and I can complain to Allah, glorious and great, of my solitude, bereft of my family and brothers, I complain of my wanderings in alien lands, bereft of country and birthplace.'[52] At the time he he wrote this he had another thirty years to reflect on the mystery of his survival.

The *Kitab al-Manazil wa'l-Diyar* is an anthology of poetry. In his lifetime and in the centuries which followed, Usamah was famed in the Arab lands not as an autobiographer, but as a poet. Medieval Arabs regarded poetry as the chief literary form, while works of prose were hardly esteemed at all. Ibn Khallikan, in his biography of Usamah ibn Munqidh, says that copies of the *Diwan*, or Collected Poems, of Usamah were in everybody's hands, and Ibn Khallikan went on to cite some of Usamah's best known lines.[53] (Revealingly

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[51] Usamah ibn Munqidh, *Al-Manazil wa'l-diyar*, ed. M. Hijazi (Cairo, 1968).

[52] Usamah, *Manazil*, pp. 3-4; translated in I.Y. Kratchkovsky, *Among Arabic Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1953), pp. 83-4 and see Kratchkovsky's comments on the manuscript in general.

[53] Ibn Khallikan, *Biographical Dictionary*, 1.177-80; see al-Dhahabi in Derenbourg, *Ousama*, 1.596-601.

enough, considering Usamah's chequered political career, those verses deal with the faithlessness of those whom Usamah had loved and how they accused him of crimes he had not committed.)

The twelfth-century *jihad* against the crusaders in the Holy Land was peculiarly a war fought by poets. Poetry played an enormous role in shaping the ethos and perceptions of the Muslim combatants – a role comparable to but greater than the role of poetry in the British trenches of the First World War. Saladin, the great commander, was a Kurd who probably spoke Turkish to his generals, but he knew Abu Tammam's *Hamasa* by heart. (The *Hamasa*, or 'Fortitude' was an Arabic anthology of pre-Islamic poetry compiled in the Abbasid period. It celebrated the bedouin virtues of courage and generosity.) Saladin also kept a copy of Usamah's *Diwan* with him.[54] What is more, when Saladin took counsel on the conduct of the war against the crusaders, he was flanked by the great administrators, al-Qadi al-Fadil and 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani. Al-Qadi al-Fadil was, of course, a famous poet as well as a major innovator in prose style. 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani had written verses on the *jihad* for Nur al-Din. Together, he and al-Qadi al-Fadil lobbied Saladin and others, urging the *jihad* upon them and often drafting their appeals in verse. We have already seen how Usamah and Tala'i' ibn Ruzzik conducted diplomatic correspondence in verse. The Mosuli chronicler, Ibn al-Athir, was also a rated poet. Subsequently, many of the Ayyubid sultans and princes who fought against the crusaders wrote poetry and patronized poets. Al-Kamil, al-Afdal, al-Nasir Dawud and al-Nasir Yusuf all wrote verses. Al-Salih Ayyub, the austere and warlike sultan who presided over the defence of Egypt against Louis IX's crusade, wrote no poetry himself, but he was the patron of two of the greatest Arab poets of the late middle ages, Baha' al-Din Zuhayr and Ibn Matruh.[55]

Ibn Sana al-Mulk (1155-1211) was only one of many poets to write a panegyric *qasida*, or ode, for Saladin on the occasion of his victory at Hattin in 1187. The strict form of the traditional *qasida* begins by mentioning deserted dwelling places and ruins and lamenting them.[56] Obviously, the conventional

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[54] M.Z. Sallam, *Al-Adab fi'l-'asr al-Ayyubi* (Cairo, 1968), pp. 232, 257.

[55] On poetry in the Ayyubid period in general, see Sallam, *Al-Adab*, passim; J. Rikabi, *La Poésie profane sous les Ayyubides et ses principaux représentants* (Paris, 1949); H. Dajani-Shakeel, '*Jihad* in Twelfth-Century Arabic Poetry: A Moral and Religious Force to Counter the Crusades', *Muslim World* 66 (1976), pp. 96-113.

[56] On the *qasida* form, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd edn), s.v. '*madih*' (G.M. Wickens); J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd* (Chicago, 1993), especially pp. 51-3 for Usamah's own work within the tradition of the bedouin *nasib*.

imagery of the first section served Usamah very well when he looked back on the desolation of Shayzar. It could also be put to use in the service of anti-crusade propaganda, for it was useful for poets who wanted to commemorate the sack and devastation of Muslim towns by crusaders – such as Ma'arrat al-Nu'man for example. The *nasib*, which is the second part of a *qasida*, celebrates the violence of the poet's love and the anguish of separation from the beloved. The *nasib* section might be used to lament over beloved women captured or killed by the Franks. In the third part of a *qasida*, the poet was expected to complain of fatigue and suffering as he journeyed by camel to a destination. Then in the *madih*, or panegyric, which usually concluded the *qasida*, the poet put forward his case for being rewarded and increased his chances of getting that reward by praising the patron. In the numerous poems which celebrated al-Kamil's reoccupation of the Delta port of Damietta after the failure of the Fifth Crusade, the panegyric took pride of place. Baha' al-Din Zuhayr was only the most prominent of the poets to celebrate the Muslim victory with a *qasida*, whose main thrust is in its concluding *madih*.

More generally, poems couched in such traditional forms encouraged the Muslim participants in the *jihad* to think of the war in terms of individual heroism and single combat – as a battle between courageous horsemen, rather than as a struggle between two territorial powers or religions. Although secular poetry played a crucial role in shaping the perceptions of the Muslim officer class, more rigorous civilian pietists frequently expressed their distrust of poetry. In a twelfth-century treatise written in Aleppo, its anonymous author (who was a fanatical enthusiast for the *jihad*) warns fathers who are bringing up sons that the 'first evil is frequenting astrologers, poets and physicians: for such people often neglect matters of the Law, even when their own belief is correct'.[57]

To return to Usamah ibn Munqidh, he wrote a number of other books. Some of them seem not to have survived, among them his oneiromantic book on sleep and veridical dreams, his book on women and his history of recent events up to about 1170.[58] A treatise on rhetoric has survived and over the centuries has been much quoted by other Arab writers.[59] For Usamah, rhetoric and belles lettres had moral and exemplary purposes. Besides being a distinguished poet and rhetorician, Usamah was also a keen rhabdophilist and the *Kitab al-*

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[57] *The Sea of Precious Virtues (Bahr al-Fava'id): A Medieval Mirror for Islamic Princes*, trans. J.S. Meisami (Salt Lake City, 1991), p. 80.

[58] On those works of Usamah which have not survived, see Derenbourg, *Ousama*, pp. 330-9.

[59] Usamah ibn Munqidh, *Lubab al-Adab*, ed. M.H. Shakir (Cairo, 1935).

'Asa, which has also survived, is an anthology of religious citations, reminiscences and poems dealing exclusively with the lore of the stick.[60] The *Kitab al-'Asa* was composed in 1171 or 1172, by which time the stick had presumably become the prop of his old age. This curious literary collection (which certainly deserves to be translated into English) contains much that is of interest. At one point Usamah recalls how when he was on a *ziyara*, or minor pilgrimage, in the territory of the kingdom of Jerusalem, he visited Sebastea and entered the church of the tomb of John the Baptist. Inside he found ten old men, with what sounds like a version of the heraldic emblem of the cross potent on their chests, standing rapt in prayer. Usamah was both touched by their piety and envious of it. At that time he knew of nothing to match such devotion among the Muslims. However, later on in Damascus, his patron Mu'in al-Din Unur took him into a place called the Peacock House and there he saw a hundred Sufis prostrate on their prayer-mats and, looking on them, he realized that in these mystical devotees Islam possessed a body of men whose piety matched anything to be found among the Christians. Thereafter, Usamah became an enthusiastic partisan of the Sufis.[61]

Elsewhere in his book on sticks, he tells the story of the ascetic Jarar who, having just acquired a magic staff and a skullcap of invisibility from a Sufi in Manbij, was able to pass undetected through the lines of the Franks, who at that time were investing Shayzar.[62] Usamah also writes about various skirmishes with the Franks in which sticks were, however tangentially, involved.[63] And he tells the story, which he had from a friend, about a man who went to the *qadi* to complain about how his wife had taken to beating him, striking at him with such force that she had broken the stick she was using. Seeing the *qadi* looking exceedingly gloomy, the man hastened to add that the *qadi* should not get too sad, for the woman only did it from the evil of her nature and her lack of education, and the man could understand that. But the *qadi* replied: 'I would not grieve, even if she killed you. My only worry is that she may think that all men are like you.'[64]

So, to conclude, there is much that is comic and much that is stirring in the *Kitab al-'Asa* and in the *Kitab al-I'tibar*. But if one reads Usamah's writings

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[60] Usamah ibn Munqidh, *Kitab al-'Asa*, ed. H.A. Muhammad (Alexandria, 1981) [to be cited as *al-'Asa*].

[61] *al-'Asa*, pp. 276-7.

[62] *al-'Asa*, pp. 235-7.

[63] *al-'Asa*, pp. 237-8, 259-60.

[64] *al-'Asa*, p. 340.

attentively, one can detect, behind all the rippling jokes and boasts, a strong groundswell of melancholy. Usamah struggles with his memories, trying to get back to before his falling out of favour with Saladin, before his involvement with political murder in Egypt, before his time as an intriguer and arch-appeaser of the Franks in Damascus, back to the uncomplicated days of his vigour and youth, when the castle of Shayzar was filled by the feasting warriors of the Banu Munqidh, and Usamah hunted lions with his father.

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XI

THE IMPACT OF THE EARLY CRUSADES ON THE MUSLIM WORLD

In a short talk delivered to a Cambridge seminar in 1985, Michael Cook, a leading historian of Islam gently mocked what 'might be dubbed the "Dynorod model"; the view that somewhere in Islamic history there was a blockage, the removal of which in counterfactual speculation would enable an Islamic miracle to gush forth'.[1] Although Cook has no sympathy with such a model, various blocks on the 'Islamic miracle' have been adduced in the past by Arab historians and more generally by Arab intellectuals. Some of these historians and intellectuals have sought to blame the Crusades for the failure of the Muslim Near East to compete in the long term with the social, commercial, technological and military advances made by Europe from, say, the twelfth century onwards. The leading Syrian historian and belletrist, Muhammad Kurd Ali (1876-1953) certainly held such a view: 'From the Frankish point of view, one of the principal benefits they derived from the Crusades was the obstruction of Muslim progress'.[2]

Turning now to what actually happened in the Middle East in the 1090s and the decades that followed, the most important event was not the First Crusade, but the death in 1092 of Malik Shah, the Seljuq Sultan who had ruled over Iran, Iraq and parts of Greater Syria. (The second most important event was, as we shall see, the rise of the Nizari Isma'ilis and their struggles against not only the Musta'li Isma'ilis, but also Twelver Shi'i and Sunni Muslims.) From the perspective of the Sunni rulers in Isfahan and Baghdad at the end of the eleventh century the loss of Jerusalem by the schismatic Fatimids was of little consequence and, insofar as it was of any consequence at all, it was probably the occasion for quiet rejoicing. Not everybody was so very quiet in their rejoicing however. After the defeat of the Egyptian army of al-Afdal at Majdal in 1099, an Egyptian poet apostrophised Raymond of Saint-Gilles in these terms:

> 'The Christian religion has triumphed with your sword. And God sustains Sanjil [Saint-Gilles]. And the people have not heard what he transmitted of the most disgraceful of defeats.'

Al-Afdal had the critical poet executed.[3]

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1. Michael Cook, 'Islam: a comment', in Jean Baechler, John A. Hall and Michael Mann (eds.) *Europe and the Rise of Capitalism*, (Oxford, 1988), p. 131-2.

2. Emmanuel Sivan, 'Modern Arab historiography of the Crusades', in idem, *Interpretations of Islam, Past and Present*, (Princeton, 1985), p. 33.

3 Ahmad Ahmad Badawi, *Al-Hayat al-Adabiyya fi 'Asr al-Hurub al-Salabiyya*, (Cairo 1979), p. 543.

The political and territorial consequences of the First Crusade have been well explored and need only be briefly sketched in here. As a result of the passage of the Crusading armies through Asia Minor, the Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus, regained such important towns in the west as Nicaea and Dorylaeum. The Turks were driven out of the coastal regions onto the central Anatolian plateau. The gains made by the Crusaders and Byzantines were almost entirely at the expense of the Seljuq Sultan of Rum, Kilij Arslan (1092-1107). Therefore, as far as inter-Muslim politics was concerned, the passage of the Crusade had the unintended effect of strengthening the power of the rival regime of Danishmend, relative to that of the Rum Seljuq Sultanate. Danishmend, a Turkoman emir of impenetrably obscure origins, controlled key towns and roads in the northern and eastern Anatolia. If one was to judge from the evidence of the *Danishmendname*, one would have to regard the Danishmend dynasty in the late eleventh century as an aggressive proponent of ideals and practices of the *ghazi* (the holy warrior) and a fierce opponent of the Christian religion. (The early Seljuqs of Rum made no such play with the ideology of Holy War.) However, the *Danishmendname*, which was first put into writing in the thirteenth century (though the earliest recension to survive dates from the fourteenth century), is a semi-legendary jumble of orally transmitted memories and misinformation. (The other main sources for the history of the both the Danishmends and the Seljuqs are almost all Arabic and of a substantially later date.) Danishmend did ally with Kilij Arslan to attempt to meet the challenge of the First Crusade, but their alliance was a temporary and tense one. After the First Crusade, Danishmend won further prestige by defeating contingents of the 1101 crusading expedition. For twenty years or so after the appearance of the First Crusade in Anatolia, the Danishmend Emir Ghazi Gumushtigin (r.1104-1134) was the most powerful Muslim ruler in Anatolia. In the longer run however, the Seljuqs would regain their pre-eminent position, in part because of the their intermittent alliances with the Comneni emperors and in part because of later Danishmend succession disputes. In the long run, the First Crusade had only delayed the apogee of the Seljuqs of Rum.

Turning to the empire of the Greater Seljuqs in Iran, in the wake of the Sultan Malik Shah's death, his youthful son Barkiyaruq (d.1105), had to struggle hard against his kinsmen in order to establish control over the heartlands of his father's empire. Northern Syria, governed by the progeny of Malik Shah's brother Tutush, was not part of that heartland. Nor did Barkiyaruq owe the sons of Tutush any favours, for, until his death in 1095, Tutush had been one of the most dangerous enemies of Barkiyaruq. Barkiyaruq did dictate letters in 1098 urging his emirs to go and fight the Crusaders.[4] But this seems to have been the beginning of the end of his activities as a holy warrior. Later under, Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad (1105-1118), various Seljuq princelings and generals, especially those based in Mosul, were despatched from Iran to campaign against the Crusaders, but without much effect.

To a large extent, Seljuq expeditions from the east were frustrated by the suspicions of the rulers of Damascus and Aleppo. Very likely those suspicions were justified and the Seljuq Sultan's declared aim of bringing aid to the Muslims of Syria thinly disguised

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4. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Muntazam*, vol. 9, p. 105.

the underlying aim of bringing Damascus and Aleppo back under the direct control of the Sultanate. Duqaq, a son of Tutush, reigned in Damascus from 1095 until 1104. As far as he was concerned, his chief enemy in Syria was not the Franks but his brother, Ridwan.[5] (Duqaq was also at odds with Fakhr al-Mulk ibn 'Ammar, the *qadi* who governed Tripoli.) Ridwan (1095-1113) precariously presided over Aleppo with the help of a Turkish garrison, but the predominantly Arab city was an interconfessional battleground, as a Sunni faction contended both with a Shi'i faction and with Isma'ili agitators.

It has long been the lazy convention of Crusader historians to discuss the policies of the big Syrian cities in the early decades of the twelfth century as if those policies were the same as those of the Turkish princelings and generals who tried with varying success to govern these places. As far as the latter are concerned it may be more helpful to think of them as *condottieri* employed by the Arab towns rather than as rulers of the towns. The Arab *ra'is* ('headman' or effectively 'mayor') was often a powerful figure. Damascus was dominated by members of the Banu Sufi dynasty who successively held the office of *Ra'is* of the city. As leaders of the *ahdath*, a kind of militia, which combined aspects of both a police force and gangsters' racket, the Banu Sufi's authority was far more than nominal. In Aleppo the Banu Badi and the Banu Khashshab competed for the post. Although the two clans were rivals and the Banu Badi were Sunnis whereas the Banu Khashshab were Shi'is, they were nevertheless allies in their hostility to Franks, Turks and Ismai'ili heretics. Despite their Shi'ism, the Banu Khashshab were just as keen as the Banu Badi on the *jihad* against the Franks and in 1118 they called in the Sunni Turkish Artuqid Ilghazi as a warleader against the Franks and later in 1123 they similarly recruited another Artuqid, Balak. In the long run Zengi in Aleppo and Nur al-Din in Damascus would bring this autonomous politics of the notables to an end.[6] Ibn al-Qalanisi's chronicle, *Dhayl Ta'rikh Dimashq*, which relates the history of Damascus up to the death of the book's author in 1160, is the oldest Syrian chronicle dealing with the Crusades to have survived. However, although Hamilton Gibb entitled his selective translation of Ibn al-Qalanisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, Gibb's title is really rather misleading and a close reading of Ibn al-Qalanisi suggests that the author was really much more interested in the contests for high office within the city than he was in anything to do with crusades.[7]

At the beginning of the twelfth century it still seemed possible that Shi'is, whether Twelvers or Nizari or Musta'lian Seveners, might take control over one or other of the

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5. On Ridwan's political career, see Robert W. Crawford, 'Ridwan the Maligned', in James Kritzek and R. Bayley Winder (eds.), *The World of Islam: Studies in Honour of P. K. Hitti*, (London, 1959), pp. 135-144. It is clear, however, why Crawford thinks Ridwan to have been maligned.

6. On Syrian urban autonomy in this period, see Eliyahu Ashtor, 'L'administration urbaine en Syrie médiévale', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, vol. 31 (1956), pp. pp. 73-128; idem, 'Républiques urbaines dans le Proche-Orient à l'époque des croisades?', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, vol. 18 (1975), pp. 117-131; Claude Cahen, 'Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urbain dans l'Asie musulmane du Moyen Age,' *Arabica*, vol. 5 (1958), pp. 225-50; vol .6 (1959), pp. 25-56, 233-65.

7. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades* selected and translated by H. A. R. Gibb, London, 1932.

big Syrian cities in the interior. For a few weeks in 1097, Ridwan briefly declared his loyalty to the Isma'ili Fatimid caliph al-Musta'li and had the *khutba* said in his name in Aleppo. Subsequently, c.1100, Ridwan, whose religious convictions seem to have been somewhat labile took to supporting the breakaway movement of the Nizari Isma'ilis (also known as Assassins). He provided protection for the Nizari agitator al-Hakim al-Munajjim (i.e. 'the Astrologer') and al-Hakim's Assassin disciples obligingly got rid of several of Ridwan's political enemies for him. The Assassins and Ridwan remained in uneasy alliance until the latter's death in 1113, but, in the long run, their hopes of taking power in Aleppo or Damascus were disappointed and later in the century they were to concentrate on building a small territorial principality in north-west Syria, centred on Masyaf.[8]

In this context of rivalry between various Seljuq kinsmen and generals, between rival dynasties of notables and urban factions, as well as between different versions of Islam, it is easy to understand how the first generation of Frankish lords in the Near East were able to insert themselves into local politics and offer themselves to one or other side in the regional disputes, which were mostly conducted by small Turkish armies. Thus, for example in 1108 Tancred of Antioch would find himself aligned with troops from Ridwan's Aleppo against Baldwin of Aleppo and the Emir of Mosul. The Turkish garrisons in the towns of northern Syria were outnumbered by the Arab populations and generally not much liked by the latter. In northern Syria the Muslim population as whole was probably outnumbered by native Christians.[9] Christians were familiar as friends and foes of old. The new threat in Syria, Egypt, and Iran in the early twelfth century was perceived to be not the Crusaders, but the Nizari Isma'ilis, their preaching and their devastatingly effective employment of the tactic of assassination.

Turning now to consider Fatimid Egypt and that part of Palestine under Fatimid control, Al-Afdal, the Fatimid vizier and the effective ruler in Egypt had at first misunderstood the purpose of the Crusaders' appearance in Syria, and he seems to have hoped that the Crusaders, operating under Byzantine direction, would take territory in northern Syria from his Turkish and Turkoman enemies. At the first the arrival of the Franks in the Near East did indeed seem to strengthen his hand and Egypt regained territory in Syria and Palestine that it had lost in the 1070s, as he recaptured the rebel port of Tyre in 1097 and, in 1098, he retook Jerusalem from the Artuqid Turkoman chieftain Suqman.

The Crusaders' capture of Jerusalem from a Fatimid garrison in 1099 exposed the folly of al-Afdal's early hopes of a Crusader-Fatimid alliance. However, Jerusalem was not yet an important place. Later *jihad* propaganda would make it so, but at the time of the First Crusade Ramleh was the Fatimid capital in Palestine and Ascalon the main military base. Besides, the Crusader occupation of Jerusalem was not expected to last very long. A letter written by a Maghribi Jew in the spring of 1100 (and preserved in the Cairo Geniza) reveals that al-Afdal was expected to launch a campaign that would retake

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8. Farhad Daftary, *The Isma'ilis: Their History and Doctrines*, (Cambridge, 1990), pp.357-361.
9. Claude Cahen, *La Syrie du nord à l'époque des Croisades*, (Paris, 1940), pp 190-1.

Jerusalem later that year.[10] A second document from the Cairo Geniza sheds a different light on the impact of the loss of Jerusalem as it was experienced in Egypt. The letter, also written in the spring of 1100, was sent to Cairo by Karaite Jews who had arrived in Alexandria as refugees from the Palestinian port of Ascalon. Historians possessed of hindsight know that Ascalon was to remain in Fatimid hands until 1153. However, the refugees in question were certain that its fall to Franks was imminent. Their letter appealed for assistance in ransoming captives and rescuing religious texts. They reported that a few Jews held in captivity in Antioch had however already abjured their faith, but at least the Crusaders (called Ashkenaz) did not rape the women, 'as others do'. Those captives who had already been ransomed had to make their way to Egypt overland, as the sea was almost totally under the control of the Franks. This letter and the one written by a Maghribi Jew make it clear that the coming of the Crusaders was only one disaster among several recent afflictions and, indeed, the impact of the Crusaders was perhaps both overshadowed by and facilitated by the spread of pestilence throughout Egypt and Palestine. Like so many of the earliest documentary references to the arrival of the Franks in the Near East, these letters show no interest whatsoever in the possible causes of the First Crusade or its aims.[11] The Crusade was a natural calamity, like the plague, famine, earthquake or indeed the arrival of the Turks in Syria in the eleventh century. (The Fatimid chronicler, Ibn Zafir, wrote of Syria being divided up between the Turks and the Franks and he cursed them both impartially[12].)

In the course of the early twelfth century the Fatimids were to send repeated expeditions into southern Palestine and they did occasionally win important victories, including one in 1103, which temporarily gave them control of Ramleh once more. However, in general, the tide was flowing against them and the coming of the First Crusade had the effect of stemming a potential Fatimid revival in Palestine in the twelfth century. At the time of the arrival of the Franks, however, the Fatimid lands had been severely affected by plague. Moreover, a civil war raged in Egypt in the late 1090s, in which al-Afdal was only slowly successful in defeating the Nizari opponents of his puppet caliph Musta'li. In 1100, at the time when the Maghribi Jew, whose letter has been preserved in the Geniza, was hoping that al-Afdal would next advance to retake Jerusalem, the vizier was still engaged in the siege of Alexandria. In the short term then, in Egypt the coming of the Crusade had less significance than the schism between Musta'lian and Nizari Isma'ilis. Al-Afdal was murdered in 1121, possibly by Isma'ilis. Thereafter, the situation deteriorated and in the longer run, during the second and third quarters of the twelfth century, Fatimid Egypt would become the Sick Man of the Levant, and the potential prize for rival adventurers operating out of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and Nur al-Din's Damascus.

In Palestine, formerly a Fatimid province though not a very securely held one, the

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10. S.D. Goitein, 'Geniza Sources for the Crusader Period; A Survey', in B. Z. Kedar, H. E. Mayer and R. C. Smail (eds.) *Outremer. Studies in the History of the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem Presented to Joshua Prawer*, (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 312-3.

11. S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 5 vols, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967-88), vol. 5, *The Individual*, pp. 372-9.

12. Ibn Zafir al-Azdi, *Akhbar al-duwal al-munqati'a*, (ed. A. Ferré) (Cairo, 1972), p. 82.

Crusaders brought law and order. Turkoman and bedouin brigandage, which is plentifully attested by the Geniza and other sources for the eleventh century, seems to have diminished, though, of course, this did not happen all at once. According to the Abbot Daniel, Bethlehem was still difficult to reach in 1104, 'for Saracens abound and carry on brigandage in those mountains'.[13] An important consequence of the Crusaders' capture of so many coastal cities was the dramatic fall from approximately the 1120s onwards in the numbers of Muslim ships trading in the Mediterranean. Instead, Egyptian merchants began to switch their investments to trade in the Red Sea and points further east.[14] The embargo imposed by the Egyptian vizier, al-Afdal on Genoese commerce, in retaliation for Genoese assistance to the Crusaders, may also have contributed to the decline of Muslim trade in the Mediterranean.[15]

Inside the newly established Crusader principalities, some Arabs collaborated with the Franks. Others went into exile rather than do so. Among the collaborators was a certain Hamdan ibn 'Abd al-Rahim, a poet, bon viveur and scientific scholar, who at the time of the First Crusade was resident in Jazr, the region to the south-west of Aleppo. In the wake of the establishment of the Principality of Antioch he took service with the Frankish lord of Atharib and held a village from him, possibly as a fief. Later, he took service with Zengi in Aleppo and after Zengi captured Atharib and other places in the region in 1135, Hamdan became governor of the Jazr region. Clearly he was well placed to write the (now lost) *History of the Franks who Invaded the Islamic Lands*, covering the years 1097-1126.[16]

When considering the exodus of (mostly Arab) Muslims from the lands newly occupied by the Crusaders, it is worth bearing in mind that substantial numbers of people had already fled to Egypt from Palestine and Syria in the late eleventh century, perhaps as a consequence of the arrival of Turkish warbands in those regions.[17] Palestine was already depopulated before the arrival of the Crusaders. When they did arrive, some urban populations, like that of Ramleh, evacuated en masse and fled to Egypt, thereby exacerbating a situation already made difficult by plague and civil war.

There were later exoduses from the Crusader lands, such as that which took place in the Nablus region and which was caused partly by a particular Frankish lord's rapacity and cruelty and partly influenced also perhaps by the Hanbali law-school's teaching that a good Muslim should emigrate from infidel-occupied territory, if at all possible. Migrations from the Crusader principalities could be seen as having Koranic resonances and as re-enacting on a lesser scale the Prophet Muhammad's *hegira* from Mecca to Medina in 622. [18] Palestinian exiles seem mostly to have settled in the big cities of the

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13. John Wilkinson, Joyce Hill and W. F. Ryan (eds. and trs.), *Jerusalem Pilgrimage 1099-1185*, (Hakluyt Society, second series, vol. 167) (London, 1988), p. 150.

14. S. D. Goitein, 'Changes in the Middle East 950-1150 as illustrated by the documents of the Cairo Geniza', in D. S. Richards, *Islamic Civilisation 950-1150*, (Oxford, 1973), pp. 28-9.

15. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, *The Community*, p. 45.

16. Cahen, *La Syrie*, pp. 41-2.

17. Goitein, 'Changes in the Middle East', p. 25.

18. Joseph Drory, 'Hanbalis of the Nablus Region in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Asian and African Studies*, 22 (1988), pp. 95-112.

Syrian interior and they naturally provided a supportive audience for preachers of the *jihad*.[19]

Undoubtedly the establishment of the Crusader principalities had an adverse affect on Muslim cultural life. Prior to its destruction in 1109 by Crusaders there was a *Dar al-'Ilm*, or library in Tripoli. It is implausibly alleged that it contained 3,000,000 books and that 80 scribes worked for it. This grand library doubled as an academy of Shi'ite sciences. Fakhr al-Muluk ibn 'Ammar, the former governor of Tripoli, was in the Munqidhite principality of Shayzar when news of the fall of the city came to him. He fainted when he heard of the destruction of the library.[20] Usamah ibn Munqidh, the warrior and memoirist who was also one of the most distinguished poets and rhetoricians of his age, studied in his youth under a leading grammarian (of Toledan origin), who, together with one of the library's calligraphers, had been recruited by the Muslim Lord of Shayzar after the Frankish destruction of Tripoli's *Dar al-'Ilm*.[21] Pre-Crusader Jerusalem also had a *Dar al-'Ilm*, though it was smaller and less distinguished.[22] Even so, despite the vanished intellectual glories of the library in Tripoli, elsewhere in Greater Syria cultural levels were not high. The golden age of the Hamdanid princes and poets in tenth-century Aleppo was long past and the region was living off its cultural capital.

Nevertheless, in the Middle East more widely, the displacements caused by the Crusade had their echoes in the classical Arabic literature of the twelfth century. The *Maqamat* ('Sessions') by al-Hariri (1054-1122) is the most highly regarded work of Arabic literary prose to have been produced in the Middle Ages. This highly wrought work deals with the activities of a wily rogue, Abu Zayd of Saruj, who in session after session reveals himself to be a master of deceit, beggary and rhetoric. Saruj, a small town to the south-west of Edessa, had been captured by Baldwin of Edessa in the course of the First Crusade. Now it seems that al-Hariri's fictional character, the mendacious mendicant, Abu Zayd of Saruj was inspired by a real-life character of the same name. Al-Hariri encountered the real Abu Zayd in a mosque in Basra where he preached a begging sermon, in which he claimed that he had been stripped of all he possessed and that his daughter had been carried off into captivity by the Crusaders.[23] Doubtless there were many such rogues wandering through Iraq at this time who sort to scrounge a living by presenting themselves as victims of the Crusade. (However, while still on the subject of al-Hariri's *Maqamat*, it is interesting to note that although Ramleh features as the site of two of the *maqamas*, or sessions, nevertheless there is no reference anywhere in al-

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19. Emmanuel Sivan, 'Refugiés Syro-Palestiniens au temps des croisades', *Revue des Etudes Islamiques*, 35 (1967), pp. 135-47.

20. Ibn Abi Tayyi, quoted in Claude Cahen, *Orient et Occident au Temps des Croisades*, (Paris, 1983), pp.222-3; Youssef Eche, *Les Bibliothèques Arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mesopotamie, en Syrie et en Egypte au Moyen Age*, (Damascus, 1962), pp. 117-121.

21. Usamah ibn Munqidh, *Memoirs of an Arab-Syrian Gentleman or an Arab Knight of the Crusades*, (P. K. Hitti tr.) (New York, 1927), pp. 237-8.

22. Eche, *Les Bibliothèques*, pp. 121-2.

23. Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld: The Banu Sasan in Arabic Society and Literature*, 2 vols, (Leiden, 1976), vol. 1, p. 100 and n.; Clement Huart, *A History of Arabic Literature*, (London, 1903), p. 135.

Hariri's work to the Franks - this despite the fact that, as I have already noted, there had been a mass evacuation from the town in advance of arrival of the First Crusade.)

There were no Arab poets in the early decades of the twelfth century who could match the achievements and reputation of Abu'l 'Ala al-Ma'ari in the eleventh century. But Ibn Munir and Ibn al-Qaysrani, two poets whose lives were profoundly affected by the Crusades, were ranked among the leading Arab poets of the early twelfth century. Abu'l-Hasan Ahmad ibn Munir al-Tarabulusi was born in Tripoli and, like many of the natives of the city, he was a Shi'i. He left Tripoli probably around the time of its occupation by the Crusaders and he made a name for himself as a satirical poet in Damascus, but after one of his satires offended the *Ra'is* of the city, he had to flee. He spent some time with the poetry-loving Banu Munqidh lords of Shayzar, before ending up as a pensionary and panegyrist of 'Imad al-Din Zengi in Aleppo. Although Zengi was a Sunni Muslim, Ibn Munir came to regard him as the fittest of all men to rule over the Muslims and even called him *Amir al-Mu'minin*, or 'Commander of the Faithful', which strictly is a title which Sunnis reserved for their Caliph. When Zengi captured Aleppo in 1144, Ibn Munir wrote a *madih*, or panegyric, on the subject. Ibn Munir died in 1152 or 1153.[24]

Sharaf al-Din Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn al-Qaysrani, achieved a reputation as perhaps the greatest poet of his age. Although he was born in Acre in 1085, his family came from Caesarea and that was where he grew up. After the Crusader occupation of the place he migrated to Damascus where he studied a wide range of subjects including literature, religious traditions, astronomy and engineering. He studied literature with the prominent Damascan poet Ibn al-Khayyat (1058-1123). One of Ibn al-Khayyat's poems dealt with the threat posed by the Franks to the virtue of Muslim women. According to Ibn al-Khayyat, Muslims were beating their throats out of fear. He was to be surpassed by as a poet by his pupil and, as we shall se, Ibn al-Qaysrani was to take a different view of the sexual danger posed by the Franks. Ibn al-Qaysrani worked as a horologist in charge of clocks in various Syrian and Palestinian towns, but he combined this activity with that of poet. As was the case with Ibn Munir, Ibn al-Qaysrani's satirical verses got him into trouble and he had to flee Damascus. Like Ibn Munir he found patronage under Zengi in Aleppo. He wrote poems celebrating the conquest of Edessa and promising Zengi Damascus. However, his output was not restricted to panegyrics. In 1145 or 1146 he visited the Frankish city of Antioch and he fell in love with the place. He wrote poems celebrating its churches, its women and the beauty of Melkite liturgy. He was particularly smitten by the beauty of Frankish women and he claimed that churches on Christian feast days provided the best opportunities for contemplating the women. In another poem he celebrated the charms of a certain Maria who sang, accompanying herself on the tambourine, and who sang in such a manner as to please the Muslims but not the Christians. Longing, regret and wonder were mingled in Ibn al-Qaysrani's poetry. Ibn al-Qaysrani died in the same year as Ibn Munir.[25]

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24. On Ibn Munir, see Clément Huart, *A History of Arabic Literature*, (London, 1903), p. 119; Umar 'Abd al-Rahman, *Nusus min Adab 'asr al-Hurub al-Salibiyya*, (Jidda, 1985), pp. 48-9; Ahmad Ahmad Badawi, *Al-Hayat al-Adabiyya fi 'asr al-Hurub al-Salibiyya bi-Misr wa'l-Sham*, (Cairo, 1979), pp. 136-8, 454-5.

25. On Ibn al-Qaysrani, see Ibn Khallikan, *Biographical Dictionary* 4 vols. (ed. and tr. MacGuckin de Slane) (Paris, 1842-71), vol. 3, p 155-8; Badawi, *Al-Hayat al-Adabiyya*, pp.141-8, 454-5; *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (second edition), s.v. Ibn al-Kaysrani [J. Schacht]

The lives and verses of Ibn Munir, Ibn al-Qaysrani, Ibn al-Khayyat and others were covered in 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani's *Kharidat al-Qasr*, or 'Virgin of the Palace', an anthology of twelfth-century Arabic poetry. 'Imad al-Din is best known today as a rather dull chronicler of the achievements of Saladin. In his own time he was more widely famous as belletrist and poet.[26] It was common for anti-crusader propaganda to be couched in poetry, for poetry and rhymed prose were the natural vehicle for rhetoric and expressions of heightened emotion.[27]

Although poems of lamentation, invective, or even erotic desire, were produced in response to the arrival of the earliest Crusaders, it took longer for a literature of *jihad*, or holy war, to develop in Syria and in Egypt. Both the practice and theory of *jihad* had been in abeyance in eleventh-century Syria and the various Muslim regional powers no longer saw it as part of their duties to conduct annual expeditions against Byzantium. Volunteers for the Muslim holy war found pagan Turkestan and India to be more fruitful fields for their endeavours. The last great age of *jihad* in Syria had been presided over by the tenth-century Hamdanid Arab rulers of Aleppo. Their holy war on the marchlands of the Byzantine empire had been fought with both the sword and the pen. Muslim victories in the tenth-century *jihad* were eloquently celebrated in poetry and Sayf al-Dawla, the Emir of Aleppo from 945 to 967, had gathered a galaxy of poets at his court, including such famous names as al-Mutanabbi and Abu Firas.[28]

The first stirring anti-Frankish polemic speech to have been preserved by the Arab chroniclers is that delivered by Abu Sa'ad al-Harawi, the chief *Qadi* of Dam, in August 1099 at the court of the Caliph in Baghdad. His words which allegedly brought tears to the eyes of his audience, were delivered as impassioned poetry (speaking, for example, of brother Muslims having no place save on the saddles of camels or in the bellies of vultures). However at least two sources attribute those same verses to the minor Iraqi poet and genealogist Ahmad Ibn Abiwardi (d.1113) and it is conceivable that they were made up by the latter.[29] Nevertheless, al-Harawi's words may be authentic, for there had previously been a tradition of *jihad* preaching in poetry and rhymed prose, of which Ibn Nubatah, a preacher at the tenth-century court of the Hamdanid Sayf al-Dawla was probably the most notable representative.[30]

Otherwise, the early preaching of the *jihad* had a less literary and rather more pietistic flavour. Ibn al-Khashshab was the Shiite *Qadi* (judge) of Aleppo. With the reluctant acquiescence of Ridwan of Aleppo, Ibn al-Khashshab led a delegation to Baghdad in 1111, to seek the assistance of the Caliph and the Seljuq Sultan against the Franks.[31]. His

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26. R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, (London, 1907) p. 348.

27. H. Dajani-Shakeel, 'Jihad in twelfth-century Arabic poetry' *The Muslim World*, vol. 66 (1976), pp. 96-113; Carole Hillenbrand, 'The First Crusade: the Muslim Perspective', in Jonathan Phillips (ed.), *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, (Manchester, 1977), pp.131, 137-9.

28. M. Canard, *Les Hamdanides*, (Paris, 1947); A. J. Arberry, *Poems of al-Mutanabbi*, (Cambridge, 1967).

29. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Kitab al-Muntazam*, (Hyderabad, 1940), vol. 9, p. 108; Emmanuel Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade: Ideologie et Propagande dans les Réactions Musulmanes aux Croisades*, (Paris, 1968), p.30.

30. Adam Mez, *The Renaissance of Islam*, (London, 1937), pp. 323-5; Alfred Morabia, *Le Gihad dans l'Islam médiéval: Le 'combat sacré 'des origines au XIIe siècle*, (Paris, 1993), p. 106.

31. Sivan, *L'Islam*, pp .pp. 32-4.

populist agitation in Baghdad was successful in persuading the Sultan to order Mawdud, his governor in Mosul, to lead an army to the assistance of the Muslims of northern Syria. However, Mawdud's first attempt to intervene in Syrian affairs was frustrated by Ridwan. On his second appearance in Syria, Mawdud was murdered by persons unknown in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Ibn al-Khashshab would himself be assassinated a few years later. (It is incidentally curious that a Shi'ite *qadi* should find nothing odd in going to Baghdad in order to seek the assistance of the two leaders of the Sunni Muslim community, but it is possible that Ibn al-Khashshab agitated for *jihad* and was supported by Aleppan Sunnis in doing so, as part of a scheme designed to destabilise Ridwan, who was known to have Isma'ili sympathies.)

'Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami (1039-1106), a professor of theology and religious law in Damascus, was the author of *Kitab al-Jihad*, a book based on lectures delivered to students in 1105. Al-Sulami linked the (surely temporary) triumph of the Franks to the moral decline of the Islamic lands and the failure of the Abbasid caliphs to lead annual campaigns of *jihad*. However, al-Sulami's treatise has only survived in part.[32]

A hitherto largely neglected source, the *Bahr al-Fava'id*, sheds particularly interesting light on the moral and intellectual impact of the Crusades on pious Muslims. The *Bahr al-Fava'id*, or 'Sea of Precious Virtues', is a homiletic treatise written in Persian by an anonymous author resident in Syria sometime between 1159 and 1162.[33] The author dedicated the work to Arslan Aba ibn Aq Sunqur, the Turkish *atabak* of Maragha (in north-eastern Iran). *The Sea of Precious Virtues* was written at a time when the propaganda for *jihad* against the Franks was developing in strength. Nur al-Din the ruler of Damasus was widely regarded as the natural leader of that *jihad.* It is not surprising then that the anonymous author should be so preoccupied with Franks, and that he should seek to explain why they came to Syria and how they might be expelled. As befits a homiletic treatise, the book's teleology has an ethical tinge. Essentially the Franks were a punishment for sin. In the early days of Islam, when the Muslims led austerely virtuous lives, they prospered and were regularly victorious. 'There were no musicians or buffoons, no places of honour in drinking parties and taverns, no golden chains.' Whereas in the author's time, the rulers were advised by astrologers and sceptics and the public weal was squandered. 'Jerusalem is destroyed and is a place of dogs and swine, and the land of the Franks prospers. *Alas for life! alas for this calamity!* Armies are mustered against Muslims: *O people of Islam, take warning!*'.[34]

The theme of *Jihad*, or holy war, looms large in the *Sea of Precious Virtues.* Indeed the first chapter of the book is entitled *The Book of Conduct of Holy War*.[35] The practice and sayings of the Prophet and his earliest Companions gave the idea of *jihad* its legitimacy. Our anonymous author, like many *jihad* theorists before him, notes that there are two sorts of *jihad*, the interior and the exterior, and that the interior *jihad*, the struggle to

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32. Sivan, *ibid*, pp.30-2; c. f. Sivan, 'La Genèse de la Contre-Croisade. Un traité Damasquin', *Journal Asiatique*, vol. 254 (1966), pp. 197-224.

33. Julie Scott Meisami (ed. and tr.), *The Sea of Precious Virtues (Bahr al-Fava'id): A Medieval Islamic Mirror for Princes*, (Salt Lake City, 1991)

34. *Ibid*, pp. 56-7.

35. *Ibid*, pp. 13-35.

purify one's own soul is more important than the exterior *jihad* against the infidel. The concept of the interior *jihad* has Sufi mystical overtones and it is clear that the author was at the very least sympathetic to Sufism. However, to concentrate here on the exterior *jihad*, the author spells out the conditions and privileges of going on *jihad* in marvellous detail. An aspiring holy warrior must secure his parent's consent and if he is in debt, his creditor's permission is also required. He must observe the essential prayers and fasts. He must provide for his wife during his absence. He must obey his officers. He may not flee from the infidel, unless he is outnumbered by two to one. His motive for taking part in the struggle must be pure. Everyone, except women, children, cripples and madmen must take part in the *jihad* if a Muslim city is actively threatened by an infidel army. However, the other type of *jihad*, a war of offence against the infidel territories is not obligatory for all able-bodied individuals. Nevertheless, every year the *Imam*, who is the leader of the Muslim community, must send out an army against the infidel, 'so that *jihad* will not be suspended and the enemy become attracted by Muslim lands'. This is a 'collective obligation' on the Muslim community. Muslims may not receive a wage for participating in the holy war, but Christian or Jewish mercenaries may be hired. The campaigns should concentrate on the infidels nearest at hand. Infidel women and children may not be killed, but opinions differ as to whether old men and priests should be. If an old man is a strategic adviser his killing is certainly allowed.[36] Kings have an absolute duty to wage *jihad* annually. 'For if Rum is not attacked it will attack.'[37] At one point *The Sea of Precious Virtues* seems to imply that certain Muslim rulers have been bought off by the infidel.[38]

As for booty taken from the infidel, a fifth of it has to be devoted to charitable purposes. The rest of it though, must be distributed amongst the combatants. A Muslim who has slain an infidel in hand-to-hand combat is entitled to strip the corpse. Apart from such cases, the booty should be assembled and distributed throughout the army, with cavalrymen getting two or three times more than the infantry. Even participating elephants, camels and asses should receive their reward, 'and the gift for an elephant should be more than that for a camel or an ass'.[39] Elsewhere in the book, our bloodthirsty scholar pauses to comment that: 'There is no lawful thing sweeter than booty from infidels like the Franks, who are unbelievers, apostates, and combatants; their beasts and their offspring are lawful booty, since they are in accordance with the Law, and become the rightful property of the owner.' Fighting and looting the Franks is as wholesome as rainwater, gardening, or charity to beggars.[40]

Of course the practice of holy war did not bring merely material rewards. There was also the prospect of martyrdom. Among the various privileges promised to the martyr was the pledge of seventy-two houris in heaven, as well as the right to intercede for seventy-two of his friends and relatives on the Day of Judgement.[41]

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36. *Ibid*, pp .26-30.
37. *Ibid*, p. 301.
38. *Ibid*, pp. 215-6.
39. *Ibid*, pp. 30-32.
40. *Ibid*, p. 324.
41. *Ibid*, pp. 32-5.

The Christians presented a doctrinal as well as a military challenge to the Muslim world. The twenty-fourth book of *The Sea of Precious Virtues* is entitled 'Book of Refutations of the Greeks and Franks'. The anti-Christian polemic presented in that chapter is fairly crude, knock-about stuff. How could Jesus be God and protect the Christians when he could not even protect himself? 'Anyone who believes that his God came out of a woman's privates is quite mad; he should not be spoken to, and he has neither intelligence nor faith'. It was notorious that Christians allowed unmarried women to have sex with whoever they like. Their judges determine the financial remuneration a woman is entitled to for having sex. But if the man is too poor to pay, then the women should be content to have performed the act as a form of charity in the eyes of God. Sex with priests in the churches at night is regarded as particularly meritorious. As for the Byzantines, they castrate their boys in order to give them the chance of a career in sin and debauchery.[42] Evidently the proximity of Christian and Muslim in twelfth-century Syria did not necessarily encourage inter-confessional understanding.

Despite the author's rabid hostility to the Christian faith, there was one feature of Christian society which he did consider worthy of emulation, for our author was one of the *'ulama* (that is a scholar of Islamic theology and law) and very conscious of what was due to the *'ulama* in a properly regulated world. 'O Prince! wise kings should treat the *'ulama* in the same manner as the kings of *Rum* [Byzantium] and the Franks treat their priests: they seat monks in their presence with honour, and do whatever the monks command.'[43] Surely, in this case the Muslim rulers should follow the example of the vain unbelievers. 'The Christian and Frankish kings sit in the dust with the priests, and honour them more than their mothers and fathers. Why? They say, "These are our learned men, and are closer to God." Therefore the kings of Islam must show even greater honour to the *'ulama*, that their claim to Muslimhood may be sound.'[44] A further indication of the author's high regard for the status of the caste to which he belonged is his presentation of its members as holy warriors. 'Beware lest you think that a *ghazi* [a holy warrior] is only he who holds a sword in his hand and confronts the infidel; for indeed, that scholar who, in mosque and *mihrab* [pulpit], holds pen in hand and knows the proofs of Islam is a warrior, and his pen is sharper than the sword.'[45]

In the long run, in the course of the twelfth century in Syria and Egypt, the anonymous author's hopes for a rise in the status of the *'ulama* would be gratified. The foundation of *madrasas*, or religious teaching-colleges in Syria, by Nur al-Din and, later, in Egypt and Syria by Saladin and his emirs would provide the *'ulama* with increased prospects of employment, remuneration and local influence.[46] The coming of the Crusaders had nothing to do with the proliferation of *madrasas*, which was in large part a response to the threat of the Isma'ili preaching mission. Nevertheless, the *'ulama* in those teaching colleges did help to formulate the *jihad* propaganda, as well as agitating for volunteers

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42. *Ibid*, p. 231-4.
43. *Ibid*, p. 215.
44. *Ibid*, p. 221.
45. *Ibid*, p. 147.
46. On the number of *madrasas* founded in Syria prior to 1300, see Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture, Form, Function and Meaning*, (Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 183, 185.

in that war. Increasingly, Turkish and Kurdish rulers and generals came to rely on the *'ulama* for their administration and increasingly too, as a result of the teaching of the *'ulama*, it was held that the rulers of Egypt and Syria derived a crucially important part of their legitimacy from their readiness to prosecute the *jihad*.

Despite *The Sea of Precious Virtues'* loathing of the Christian Franks, there are signs that its author considered heresy to be an even greater threat to the well-being of the Islamic community. His view of what the heretics stood for is a confused and composite one, and he gives his opponent(s) different but overlapping names. Nevertheless, he seems to have seen the Nizari Isma'ilis, with their base at Alamut in northern Iran, as the real enemy.' Shedding a heretic's blood is the equivalent of seventy holy wars.'[47]

Our author, although anonymous and, until now, fairly comprehensively neglected by historians of the Crusades, was nevertheless not unrepresentative of his times. Al-Ghazali (1059-1111), the mystical philosopher and probably the greatest thinker of his age, was much preoccupied by the threat that the Fatimid caliphate and the Isma'ili revolutionary mission posed to Sunni Islam. He returned to the topic repeatedly, but especially in his treatise, *al-Mustazhri fi Fada'ih al-Batiniyah*, 'On the Shameful Actions of the Batinites' (Batinite was a general term used to describe heretics of an esoteric persuasion). Despite the various plaintive embassies which were sent from Syria to Baghdad, where al-Ghazali taught, in none of his writings does al-Ghazali make any reference to the Franks and the threat that their Crusades pose to the Muslims.[48]

The Sea of Precious Virtues makes no specific military recommendations. Instead, like al-Sulami before him and like the pious contemporaries of Saladin and Baybars after him, its author is inclined to see the future and surely inevitable victory of the Muslims as depending on the moral rearmament of the entire Muslim community. The Kings must abolish unjust taxes. Their subjects must eschew fornication, alcohol, singing, poetry, backgammon, dog-breeding, astrology, buffoonery, commercial fraud, puppetry, swings, gold-trimmed costumes, painting, dice-play, snake-charming and much else besides.

Like most of his contemporaries, the author of the *Sea of Precious Virtues* feared and waited for the coming of Dajjal, the Antichrist. One-eyed Dajjal will appear riding on an ass and accompanied by 70,000 hooded Jews. He will claim divine powers, but he will ultimately be defeated by Jesus. After Jesus has killed Dajjal, he will break the Cross and preach the true faith which is Islam. His will be the final reign of justice before the End of the World.[49] Elsewhere he remarks that the fifth and last auspicious battle will be that at the end of history when Constantinople will be conquered by the Muslims and the Antichrist defeated.[50]

The well-known political theorist, al-Mawardi in the eleventh century wrote copiously on the *jihad*, even though there was then no significant Byzantine or Frankish threat. His intellectual status ensured that his views were much cited and discussed by later

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47. Meisami, *The Sea*, p. 239.

48. Morabia, *Le Gihad*, pp.191, 438n.; c.f. Anne K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: the Jurists*, (Oxford, 1981), p. 109.

49. Meisami, *The Sea*, p. 260.

50. *Ibid*, p.282.

generations. By contrast, there is no indication that al-Sulami ranked high in the academic or theological hierarchies of Damascus, nor that his treatise was much read by later *jihad* polemicists. He did not teach in the main mosque of Damascus, but in one in the suburbs and his was a voice preaching in the urban wilderness to a small band of students. Again, *The Sea of Precious Virtues* seems to have had no effect on its designated patron in Azerbaijan. One only begins to hear a lot about holy war in the late twelfth century, but, even then, prolific writers like the warrior and politician, Usamah ibn Munqidh, or the mystical pilgrim and tactical theorist, al-Harawi, never seem to mention the word *jihad*.

So the real as opposed to the literary *jihad* was slow to get under way. The dedication of *The Sea of Virtues* to the lord of Maragha suggests that its author expected assistance in Syria to come from the heartlands of the empire of the Greater Seljuqs. More generally exiles from Palestine and Syria looked for help from the East. As we have already seen, the earliest hopes were focused on Barkiryaruq. But the first soldier to take pains to present himself as the leader of the *jihad* against the Franks was Ilghazi, the commander of a band of Turkoman cavalry who moved into Syria from northern Iraq. It was Ilghazi who won one the first important victories against the Franks at Balat (or *ager sanguinis*) in northern Syria in 1119. Ilghazi made deliberate use of *jihad* propaganda and had Ibn al-Khashshab address his troops. He also forced his wild and woolly Turkoman tribal following to take an oath to prosecute the *jihad*. However, in practice, Ilghazi, who was based at Mardin, spent much of his time warring against neighbouring Muslims and, since he was a ferocious drinker, he was hardly appeared to be the ideal holy warrior.[51] Later on, more piously plausible candidates for the leadership of the *jihad* would present themselves - most notably Nur al-Din and Saladin. However, their careers and ideology fall outside the scope of my survey and, in any case, they are already the subject of excellent monographs .[52]

A sustained and concerted practical response to the Crusades was slow to develop. Equally, it took time for the Crusader and the Frank, more generally, to insert themselves into the popular literature of Islam - that is, into its feuilletoniste serials of derring-do, straggling sagas of improbable battles, scheming sorcerers and kidnapped damsels. Nevertheless eventually the Franks, even including such prominent leaders of the First Crusade as Godfrey of Bouillon and Bohemund do make garbled and fantastical appearances in the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights* and in similar romances that were put together sometime between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries .[53] As Malcolm Lyons has noted, it is the visual impression that is stressed - of huge, clean-shaven men "like left-overs from the race of 'Ad [an ancient race of giants attested to in the Koran]" or not like men at all. They carry lances or spears of tempered steel, with broad heads;

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51. Carol Hillenbrand, 'Career of Najm al-Din Il-Ghazi', *Der Islam*, 58 (1981), pp. 250-92.

52. Most notably Nikita Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din, un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des croisades 511-569A.H./1118-1174*, 3 vols., (Damascus, 1967) and M. C. Lyons and David Jackson, *Saladin: the Politics of Holy War*, (London, 1982)

53. Robert Irwin, *The Arabian Nights. A Companion*, (London, 1994), pp. 88-9; idem, 'The Image of the Byzantine and the Frank in Arabic Popular Literature of the Late Middle Ages' in Benjamin Arbel, Bernard Hamilton and David Jacoby (eds.), *Latin and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, (London, 1989), pp. 226-242.

their archers never miss, and their shafts pierce mail. In their armies, rider, horse and armour form a single whole, and for all that the caliph of al-Andalus points out that the Franks seen in the east are "the weak ones", the memory of the Crusades has left a formidable enough impression ...'[54]

To conclude, in the short term the First Crusade had the effect of temporarily strengthening the power of the Danishmends, relative to that of the Seljuqs of Rum. As far as the politics of the big Syrian cities was concerned, they at first had very little effect at all and were perceived of as yet another band of warriors which could be recruited or allied with by one or other of the warlords who hoped to profit from the slow disintegration of the empire of the Greater Seljuqs. The establishment of a Crusader kingdom in Palestine may have prevented the Fatimids from taking advantage of that disintegration. The success of the Franks was commonly seen as a punishment for Muslim sin and it stimulated a growing body of pietistic literature which, like *The Sea of Precious Virtues*, preached the values of puritanism and moral rearmament. Early preaching for a *jihad* fell upon mostly unresponsive ears and even those who seemed to respond to pleas for help from Syria and Palestine usually had other covert agendas. Nevertheless, in large part because of agitation on the part of refugees and pietist *'ulama*, slowly pressure was put upon the warlords to turn their armies against the crusaders. Gradually also warlords, such as Zengi, Nur al-Din and Saladin found it convenient to boast about their prosecution of the *jihad* and to use it to legitimate their rights to usurp power. Early military adventures against the Crusaders were often disastrous and for much of the twelfth century Muslim rulers lacked the financial resources and military manpower to dislodge the Franks from the Syrian littoral. In this light, then, the unification of Syria and Egypt under Saladin can be seen as the delayed but necessary response to the arrival of the First Crusade in the Near East.[55]

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54. M. C. Lyons, *The arabian Epic: Heroic and oral story-telling*, (3 vols.) (Cambridge, 1995); c.f. idem, in Maya Schatzmiller (ed.), *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-Century Syria*, (Leiden, 1993), pp.147-161.

55. On the more long-term effects of the Crusades in the Near East, see Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade;* Robert Irwin, 'Islam and the Crusades, 1096-1699', in Jonathan Riley-Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, (Oxford, 1995), pp.217-259.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

XII

WHAT THE PARTRIDGE TOLD THE EAGLE: A NEGLECTED ARABIC SOURCE ON CHINGGIS KHAN AND THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammād Ibn ʿArabshāh was born in Damascus in 1392. Taken off into capitivity by Tamerlane in 1401, he grew up and studied in Samarqand. Later he travelled in Chinese Tartary, Khwārazm and the Dasht-i Qipchaq. (In his unpublished life of the Mamlūk Sultan, Jaqmaq, he mentions discussing the depredations of Tamerlane with Jalāl al-Dīn ibn Toqtamish in the Kipchak capital, Saray.) He travelled on to Astrakhan (where he spent four years) and he subsequently worked as a secretary for the Ottoman Sultan, Muḥammad I in Adrianople. Having returned to the Mamlūk lands in 1422, he produced his well-known and somewhat splenetic account of the career of Tamerlane, the *ʿAjā'ib al-maqdūr fi akhbār Tīmūr* in 1435. Ibn ʿArabshāh's major works were in Arabic, but he also knew Persian, Turkish and, allegedly, Mongolian. He died in Cairo in 1450.[1]

The *ʿAja'īb* apart, Ibn ʿArabshāh's other books have not received much attention. Among these works is his translation from Persian into Arabic of Saʿd al-Dīn Warawīnī's thirteenth-century collection of animal fables, the *Marzubān-nāma*.[2] Subsequently in 1448, Ibn ʿArabshāh produced an expanded adaptation, the *Fākihat al-Khulafā' wa-Mufākahāt al-Zurafā'*, or "Fruits of the Caliphs and Jokes of the Witty". Like *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, the *Fākihat* was a work in the mirrors-for-princes genre, a political treatise whose arguments are lightly disguised as animal fables.

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[1] On the life of Ibn ʿArabshāh, see al-Sakhāwī, *al-Daw' al-lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ*, (Cairo, 1934–6), vol. 2, pp. 126–31; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi* (Cairo, 1984), vol. 2, pp. 131–45; F. Wustenfeld, *Gesichtsschreiber der Araber* (Gottingen, 1882), pp. 216–8; W.J. Fischel, *Ibn Khaldun and Tamerlane* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952), pp. 1–3; J. Pedersen, "Ibn ʿArabshāh," *EI*[2]. Ibn ʿArabshāh's *ʿAjā'ib al-maqdūr fī akhbār timūr* was published by Golius in Leiden in 1636. It was translated into English by J.H. Sanders as *Tamerlane or Timur, the Great Amir* (London, 1936).

[2] On Wārawīnī's *Marzubān-nāma*, see E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (Cambridge, 1928), vol. 2, p. 489; R. Levy, *The Tales of the Marzuban* (London, 1959).

It was edited and published by G. Freytag as *Liber Arabicus sive fructus imperatorum et Jocatio ingeniosorum* in Bonn in 1832.[3] Despite an enthusiastic review by Sylvestre de Sacy in the *Journal des Savants* in 1835,[4] after that brief upsurge in interest, the book hardly seems to have been read by anyone in the West. There are several possible reasons for the *Fākihat*'s failure to attract attention. Animal fables were no longer in fashion—even among nineteenth-century orientalists. Ibn 'Arabshāh wrote in a rhymed prose in which both grammar and sense were tortured and parts of his narrative were further muddied by rather a lot of high-flown invective. Some of his Arabic was incorrect and some of my readings are therefore speculative.

In the tenth and last chapter of the *Fākihat*, Ibn 'Arabshāh leaves off telling edifying fables and treats of the unedifying rise of Chinggis Khan and the history of the Mongol peoples in some detail.[5] It is evident that much of this detail has been borrowed and adapted by him from Juwaynī's *The History of the World Conqueror*, a work written in Persian in the 1250s.[6] However, unlike other historians writing in the Mamlūk lands, such as al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrībirdī, Ibn 'Arabshāh seems to have made direct use of Juwaynī, rather than making use of those bits of his work transmitted in al-'Umari's fourteenth-century geographical work, the *Masālik al-Abṣār*. Moreover, though Ibn 'Arabshāh made extensive use of Juwaynī, some of his information seems to be original to him.

The context of Ibn 'Arabshāh's discussion of Chinggis Khan is a long discourse addressed by a partridge (courtier) to an eagle (king) on good order, in which we are told that order depends as much on the pens of the *'ulamā'* as it does on the swords of kings, but this theme is soon dropped in favour of a long account of the career and depredations of Chinggis Khan. First the partridge, speaking on behalf of Ibn 'Arabshāh, offers a description of the manners and customs of the Mongols prior to the rise of Chinggis Khan, in which the Mongols feature as the steppe equivalent of the Jāhilī Arabs.[7]

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[3] Ibn 'Arabshāh, *Liber Arabicus sive Fructus imperatorum et Jocatio ingeniosorum*, ed. G. Freytag (Bonn, 1832). There is also a (presumably late-nineteenth-century) undated Cairene version of the *Fākihat*.

[4] Sylvestre de Sacy, "Liber Arabicus", *Journal des Savants* (1835), 602–12, 652–67.

[5] Ibn 'Arabshāh, *Liber Arabicus*, pp. 227–50.

[6] 'Aṭā Malik Juwaynī, *The History of the World-Conqueror*, tr. J.A. Boyle (Manchester, 1958).

[7] Ibn 'Arabshāh, *Liber Arabicus*, pp. 227–9.

There follows an account of the origins of Chinggis Khan among the Qūtāt tribe, (but Juwaynī has Qiyāt), his service with Wang Khan and his rise in that Khan's service thanks to his knowledge of *firāsa* (physiognomy) and *furūsiyya* (horsemanship), his flight from Wang Khan and war against him, the war against Altun Khan, the war against the Khwārazmshāh, and the advance of the Mongol generals into Iran.[8] Chinggis's death and descent into the lowest of hells is only briefly related.[9] Although much of the narrative is cribbed from Juwaynī, there are parts where Ibn 'Arabshāh seems to have more detailed and perfectly plausible information. His account of the fate of Nishapur at the hands of Tolui's sister seems to be a case in point.[10] Taken as a whole the *Fākihat* offers a slightly monotonous account of treachery, butchery and desecration in one city after another. The loss of life was tragic of course, but Ibn 'Arabshāh particularly stressed the damage done to centres of Islamic learning by the westward advance of the Mongols.

The author's observations on Mongol life are of some interest—for example his report that the elite of the pre-Chinggisid Mongols could be distinguished from the rest only by their use of iron stirrups.[11] But most interesting of all is Ibn 'Arabshāh's account of the promulgation of the Mongol code, the *yāsa*. In recent years the original meaning of the word, *yāsa*, and the evolution of that term has attracted quite a lot of attention among scholars. In a series of articles on "The Great Yāsa of Chingis Khan", Professor David Ayalon, reacting to an earlier and underresearched work by A.N. Poliak, demonstrated that Mamlūk historians in Egypt were very poorly informed about Mongol law and that there was no good evidence that Mamlūk secular justice was influenced by a Mongol law code which was called the *yāsa*.[12] (I think that it is worth noting here that, while Ayalon in what he published succeeded in demonstrating that al-'Umarī, the key Mamlūk authority, took some of his information from Juwaynī, still Ayalon does not seem to have found a source for al-'Umari's detailed listing of some of the alleged ordinances in

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[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 230–50.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 250.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 249.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 228.
[12] David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān, A Re-examination," *Studia Islamica*, 33 (1971), 97–140 (part A); 34 (1971), 151–80 (part B); 36 (1972), 113–58 (part C1); 38 (1973), 107–56 (part C2).

the *yāsa*. Since some of the Mongol regulations which al-'Umarī lists are also noted by European travellers among the Mongols, al-'Umarī's information would appear to be accurate, at least in part, but we do not know where he got that information from.) Subsequently Dr. David Morgan has taken iconoclasm somewhat further and suggested that there is no good evidence to indicate that Chinggis Khan had promulgated a written code of law at the *quriltai* of 1206 or at any other time—and, even if there ever was such a code, we do not know what was in it.[13]

But Ibn 'Arabshāh thought that he knew what was in it. He placed his account of Mongol laws after his account of Chinggis's defeat of Altun Khan (601/1204–5) and before his account of the commencement of hostilities with the Khwārazmshāh—a placing which would be consistent with the promulgation of the *yāsa* at the 1206 *quriltai*, though Ibn 'Arabshāh does not actually say this.[14] Now the code which he purports to give an account of is not called by him the *yāsa*. He calls it the *tūra* (<Turkish *töre*). However, it is a written code of law—or, at least, something which approximates to law. According to the *Fākihat*, Chinggis Khan called on his wise men to find a script in which to write his language in. They suggested the "Mughul" script and this was used to render "Qūtātū", or the language of the Qūtāt tribe. It had a fourteen-letter alphabet. This script was used to write down everything, including their orders, declarations, histories, accounts and laws.[15]

Ibn 'Arabshāh's account of Mongol law and custom is somewhat polemical. According to him it included ordinances regarding hunting and warfare (which he does not trouble to go into) and various tyrannous rules, or *aḥkām*, which he finds more interesting. Among these latter, Ibn 'Arabshāh singles out the following:

1. Thieves may be crucified and adulterers strangled on the evidence of a single witness. If a man is spotted stealing from a tent, he should be crucified and his hands cut off with a javelin. All his property passes to the ruler—as do his children as slaves.

2. An accusation takes the precedence, whether it is true or a lie—or, to put it another way, the accused is held to be guilty until proved innocent.

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[13] D.O. Morgan, "'The Great *Yāsā* of Chingiz Khān' and Mongol Law in the Ilkhanate," *BSOAS*, 49 (1986), 163–76.

[14] Ibn 'Arabshāh, *Liber Arabicus*, p. 233.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 232–3.

3. Freemen, peasants and ploughmen are to be enslaved.

4. The relatives of the husband have rights in his wife and can take turns in sleeping with her, though the husband has first claim. She can never leave the husband's clan and they retain her dowry.

5. There is no *ʿidda*, or waiting period after widowhood or divorce, nor is there any seclusion of the widow or divorcée during such a period.

6. The evidence of slave-girls and boys can be accepted against their elders and betters.

7. The orders of the ruler have instant force.

8. Compulsory gifts can be demanded and casual gifts between individuals can be turned into annual levies.

9. One must prostrate oneself on one's knees before the *ḥākim* (or magistrate in authority).

10. The family as a group (including the women) are held accountable for any crime committed by a member of that group.

11. The lowborn may not precede the noble, even if they are richer.

12. One may only act according to *ʿaql* (understanding) and refrain from anything that goes beyond that. Here, the implicit context is that of a legal ruling and *ʿaql*, what is independently known or what can be achieved through systematic reasoning, is implicitly contrasted with *naql*, tradition, or what is handed down.

13. The *ḥākim* has no discretion to exercise clemency.

14. Finally and bemusingly, if a man steals a camel from their encampment, or even a louse from a robe but then returns it, there is no penalty or fine, and if he wishes he crushes it, or, alternatively puts it down. And sometimes he chooses to return it to its original place, but, if he kills that creature, then the owner can go to law, claiming that he had raised the creature and nourished it with his own blood. Then the *ḥākim* may award the complainant blood-money. (Ibn ʿArabshāh finds this especially preposterous, but it is not clear why, unless, indeed, he is claiming that the Mongols engaged in litigation over dead fleas.)[16]

The collection of laws (though perhaps it should be regarded more as a registration of customary practices) in which the above menacing snippets are found is called the *tūra*. The scrolls, wrapped in silk

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[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 233–4.

and decorated with gold, are stored in the royal treasury.[17] Having dealt with law, Ibn 'Arabshāh offers a few lines on Mongol chancery practice,[18] before going on to give an account of the ritual of the *quriltai*, with its elevation of the elected khan on a tiger-skin held by four of the leading emirs, the *nolo episcopari* protestations of the khan-to-be, and the triple prostration of the *jūk* by the khan's subjects and then the khan's prostration to the sun. The *tūra al-Jinkizkhāniyya* was invariably read out during the *quriltai* and the khan was made to swear that he would observe the *tūra* in a kind of *bay'a*, or pact, with his subjects, who on their part also swore to observe it. After this, the khan distributed largesse and presided over the coronation celebrations. Elections of a khan were held in the spring, but *quriltais* could go on a year or two. The Chaghatai and the Mughuls still held these assemblies in the author's own times.[19]

From Ibn 'Arabshāh's account of its contents, the *tūra* would hardly seem to be the Central Asian equivalent of Justinian's *Codex*. However, Ibn 'Arabshāh's aim was not to give a systematic account of Mongol legal practice, but to single out areas where it differed disgracefully from the *Sharī'a*. Being a Muslim himself, Ibn 'Arabshāh thought that Muslim law was the thing. He was not indulging in antiquarianism in giving some account of the *tūra*; these laws, he says still had force among the Khatai, the Qipchaqs, the Chaghatai and others.

Plainly much of what he describes is likely to have been pre-existing custom among the Mongols anyway and much of it was not law in any modern sense, but rather a series of decrees, maxims and ordained rituals, the observance of which was conducive to the good nomadic life—the pagan steppe equivalent of the Muslim *Sunna*. Given that a written language (actually based on the Uighur script) was developed for the Mongols during the lifetime of Chinggis Khan, surely the laws, maxims, and practices of the Mongols would have been one of the first things that the ruler would have wished to see preserved in that script? Juwaynī relates that Chinggis fixed laws, regulations and penalties for every matter and that these *yāsa*s and decrees were written down on scrolls and stored in the treasury.[20] Juwaynī stressed the degree to which these *yāsa*s were compatible

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 234.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 234.
[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 234–5.
[20] Juwaynī, tr. Boyle, pp. 23–5.

with Muslim law: Ibn 'Arabshāh's very different account stressed the reverse, but, for good or ill, they both believed that there was this written code. Obviously Ibn 'Arabshāh's testimony, which comes late, is not strong evidence for this code, but it is evidence—another straw in the wind.

To conclude, the *Fākihat* is a text which deserves more attention. Indeed, it deserves to be translated in its entirety. It only remains to be noted that there are some curious anecdotes about Tamerlane in the earlier chapters of this intriguing collection of animal fables.

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XIII

Under Western Eyes: A History of Mamluk Studies

The exotic and savage Mamluks, the despotic sultans, their vast and extravagant harems, the political murders, the sanguinary punishments, the mounted skirmishes in the shadow of the pyramids, the moonlight picnics in the City of the Dead, the carnival festivities at the time of the flooding of the Nile, the wild dervish *mawlids* . . . .

Is there not something paradoxical in the fact that the Mamluks owe their survival in modern memory to men (mostly) who were and are for the most part quiet and solitary scholars, much more familiar with the book than the sword? I have not punched anyone since I was a schoolboy. Yet, when, as a research student, I looked for a thesis topic, I was hooked by Steven Runciman's description of the sultan Baybars I. According to the doyen of Crusading history, Baybars "had few of the qualities that won Saladin respect even from his foes. He was cruel, disloyal and treacherous, rough in his manners and harsh in his speech. . . . As a man he was evil, but as a ruler he was among the greatest of his time."[1] (Peter Thorau, of course, has since offered a slightly more benign view.)

Many of those who have studied the Mamluks have not done so out of liking for them. Edward Gibbon, who was a contemporary of the Mamluks (or neo-Mamluks, if you prefer), put the case against them in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-78): "A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years." Gibbon went on to contrast the "rapine and bloodshed" of the Mamluks with their "discipline and valour."[2]

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[1]Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 3, *The Kingdom of Acre and the Later Crusades* (Cambridge, 1955), 348. This work is listed as no. 2158 in the Chicago *Mamluk Studies* bibliography. However, from this point on, since this article ranges so widely over the extensive range of Mamluk studies, references in my notes will usually only be given to works which, for one reason or another, have not been listed in the excellent *Mamluk Studies: A Bibliography of Secondary Source Materials* (Middle East Documentation Center, the University of Chicago, October 1998 and in progress).

[2]Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury (London, 1912), 6:377-78.

Constantin-Francois de Chassebouef, comte de Volney (1757-1820), took a similarly bleak view of the Mamluk system as he knew it in his own time: "how numerous must be the abuses of unlimited powers in the great, who are strangers both to forbearance and to pity, in upstarts proud of authority and eager to profit by it, and in subalterns continually aiming at greater power."[3] Volney's writings, his *Voyage en Égypte et en Syrie* (1787) and his *Les Ruines, ou méditations sur les révolutions* (1791), helped to direct predatory French interests in the direction of Egypt and are part of the background to Bonaparte's expedition there in 1798. Famously (or notoriously, if one happens to be of Edward Said's party) Bonaparte took a team of savants with him. Of course, the past which most attracted these scholars was the Pharaonic one. However, a few interested themselves in the history of the medieval Mamluks, if only for latter-day utilitarian reasons. Jean-Michel Venture de Paradis had helped Volney with his *Voyage en Égypte et Syrie*. Having come across a manuscript of Khalīl al-Ẓāhirī's *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik* in Paris, he went on to produce a stylish, if erratic, translation of it. Venture de Paradis studied the Egypt of Barsbāy and Jaqmaq, the better to understand the same country under Murād and Ibrāhīm Bey, and he subsequently took part in the 1798 expedition to Egypt and took a leading role in the researches of the Institut d'Égypte.[4]

The French who landed in Egypt in 1798 and who went on to invade Palestine were intensely conscious of the fact that Frenchmen had been there before them. The history of the Mamluks was for a long time ancillary to the study of the Crusades and of the fortunes of France in the Levant. In the eighteenth century, religious scholars belonging to the Maurist order had played the leading role in editing documents relating to the history of France and therefore also relating to the history of French Crusades. In the course of the French Revolution, the Maurist Superior-General was guillotined and the order was dissolved. When monarchy was restored the Académie des Inscriptions et des Belles-Lettres was set up to continue the work of the Maurists. Quatremère and Reinaud, who had oriental interests, were both members of the founding committee of five. They, among other tasks, oversaw the publication of the *Recueil des historiens des croisades*, which, in its volumes devoted to *Historiens orientaux*,[5] offered translated extracts from chronicles by Abū al-Fidá and Abū Shāmah covering the early years of the

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[3]Volney cited in Albert Hourani, *Europe and the Middle East* (London, 1980), 85-86.

[4]Jean Gaulmier, ed., *La Zubda Kachf al-Mamālik de Khalīl az-Zāhirī, Traduction inédite de Venture de Paradis* (Beirut, 1950).

[5]Paris, 1872-1906.

Baḥrī Mamluk Sultanate. However, the oriental volumes of the *Recueil* were overwhelmingly weighted to coverage of the edifying career of that chivalrous paladin, Saladin.

Even so, others were editing and sometimes translating texts which had a bearing on Mamluk history, such as Ibn 'Arabshāh's *'Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr*. Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838) was the grandest and most influential orientalist of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Before the Revolution he had worked for the Royal Mint and he had strong prejudices about money. It was, I think, because of this that in 1796 he published a translation of al-Maqrīzī's *Shudhūr al-'Uqud*, since, as Silvestre de Sacy saw it, the fifteenth-century Egyptian historian was an ally in the latter's argument against contemporary French ministers and bankers, who were so foolish as to believe that there must be a fixed rate of exchange between gold and silver.[6] Silvestre de Sacy (who was a much more polemical orientalist than Said has allowed) also took up cudgels against Montesquieu's account of oriental despotisms and the notion that there were no real property rights under such despotisms. In his exceedingly scholarly polemic, Silvestre de Sacy drew heavily again on al-Maqrīzī, making much reference this time to the *Khiṭaṭ*.[7] Furthermore the *Chrestomathie de la langue arabe* (1806) included biographical notices of al-Maqrīzī by al-Sakhāwī and Ibn Taghrībirdī.

Sylvestre de Sacy seems to have transmitted his enthusiasm for al-Maqrīzī to his distinguished pupil, Étienne-Marc Quatremère (1782-1857). Quatremère studied and taught Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic, and he also had a strong interest in Coptic and Pharaonic Egyptian. Despite his wide range of interests and publications, he was the first to devote serious and sustained study to the Mamluks. His edition and translation of al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-Sulūk* under the title *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte*[8] is an example of text as pretext, being not so much a work of history as of philology. Although al-Maqrīzī is a useful source for his own lifetime, Quatremère, who was not primarily a historian, chose to translate the *Sulūk* for the early Mamluk period, since obviously the fortunes of Baybars, Qalāwūn and al-Ashraf Khalīl overlapped with those of the Crusaders. (The only reason that Quatremère did not start with al-Maqrīzī on the Fatimids and Ayyubids was because it was planned that those sections of the *Sulūk* should go in the

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[6]Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy, *Traité des monnoies musulmanes* (Paris, 1797).

[7]Silvestre de Sacy, "Sur la nature et les révolutions du droit de proprieté territoriale en Egypte, depuis la conquête de ce pays par les musulmans jusqu'à l'expédition de François," part1, *Mémoires de l'Institut Royal de France, classe d'histoire et de littérature ancienne*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1815), 1-165; part 2, *Mémoires de l'Institut Royal de France, académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1821); part 3, *Mémoires de l'Institut Royal de France, académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, vol. 7 (Paris, 1824), 55-124.

[8]Paris, 1837-45.

Receuil, though nothing ever came of this.) Quatremère had inherited his teacher's passion for and mastery of philology and the inordinately lengthy footnotes to *Histoire des sultans mamlouks* are tremendous displays of erudition on the meanings of words for military offices, gypsies, polo balls, wardrobe-masters, heraldry, and much else. Those annotations were later heavily drawn upon by Dozy for his dictionary of post-classical Arabic. They also provided a starting point for later researches into institutions by Gaudefroy-Demombynes and Ayalon. They were industrious giants in those days and among Quatremère's other publications was an edition of Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah, Prolégomènes d'Ibn Khaldoun: texte arabe.*[9] As we shall see, Ibn Khaldūn was to do as much as anyone in shaping western historians' perceptions of the Mamluks.

A student of Quatremère, Gustave Weil (1808-89) was the first scholar to provide a sustained, detailed, and referenced history of the Mamluks. Those were the days when one did not need a historical training to write history and Weil's wide range of publications included a translation of *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah*. His history of the Mamluk period, *Geschichte des Abbasidenchalifats in Egypten,*[10] was a sequel to *Geschichte der Chalifen,*[11] and, like its precursor, it uncritically reproduced the material provided by sources such as al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Iyās.[12] William Muir's *The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt 1260-1517*[13] acknowledged a heavy debt to Weil's ferreting among obscure manuscripts on the continent. Apart from Weil, Muir's three main sources were al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrībirdī and Ibn Iyās. Muir was a devout Christian and, as he made plain in his preface and introduction, the Mamluks' chief importance was as adversaries of the Crusaders, as the Mamluks "were finally able to crush the expiring efforts of that great armament of misguided Christianity." A few exceptional figures apart, Muir was not favorably impressed by the Mamluks: "But the vast majority with an almost incredible indifference to human life, were treacherous and bloodthirsty, and betrayed, especially in the later days of the Dynasty, a diabolic resort to poison and the rack, the lash, the halter and assassination such as makes the blood run cold to think of. . . ."[14]

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[9]Paris, 1858. On the life and work of Quatremère, see Johann Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1955), 152-53.

[10]Stuttgart, 1860-62.

[11]Mannheim, 1846-51.

[12]Fück, *Die arabischen Studien*, 175-76; D.M. Dunlop, "Some Remarks on Weil's History of the Caliphs," in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt, eds., *Historians of the Middle East* (London, 1962), 315-29.

[13]London, 1896.

[14]Ibid., xii, 220.

Max van Berchem (1863-1921), a Swiss archaeologist and epigrapher, established and worked on the *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum* from 1903 onwards. This massive collaborative survey was designed to cover the inscriptions of Anatolia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Van Berchem's team of collaborators included Sobernheim, Mittwoch, and Herzfeld in Syria and Gaston Wiet in Egypt. Van Berchem treated buildings as historical documents, or rather he actually considered them to be superior to documents as they could be used to check the accuracy of documents.[15] Van Berchem's work (small essays within the *Corpus*) on the names and entitulature featured in such inscriptions prepared the way for later work done by Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Sauvaget, Ayalon, and others on office holding and other institutional aspects of Mamluk society.

> They flee from me, that sometime did me seek
> With naked foot, stalking in my chamber.
> I have seen them gentle, tame and meek,
> That now are wild. . . .

. . . are the opening lines of a fine erotic poem by Sir Thomas Wyatt (ca. 1503-42). Gaston Wiet, though a French citizen, was directly descended from the Scottish poet. Van Berchem was the major influence on the youthful Gaston Wiet. Wiet was to publish a great deal on a wide range of topics relating to Mamluk history and culture. (Besides his narrative history, *L'Égypte arabe . . . 642-1517* [1937] in G. Hanotaux, *Histoire de la nation égyptienne*, these include a translation from Ibn Iyās, a digest of Ibn Taghrībirdī's *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī*, a book on Cairo's mosques, a translation of al-Maqrīzī's *Ighāthah*, extensive work on the same author's *Khiṭaṭ*, a little book on medieval Cairo, a catalogue of the Cairo Museum's holdings of glassware, etc., etc.) Nevertheless, though Wiet wrote frequently and at length on the Mamluks, he was not especially interested in them per se. He was just as interested in modern Egyptian novels, of which he translated several examples. The real focus of his enthusiasm was the city of Cairo, which he lived in and loved and finally departed from with the greatest reluctance.

Although Creswell was Wiet's furious enemy and rival, this was not really Wiet's fault, since what Creswell especially hated about Wiet was that the latter was French. Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell (1879-1974) was like Wiet an admiring disciple of Van Berchem. Creswell's *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*[16]

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[15]On van Berchem, see K. A. C. Creswell, "In Memoriam—Max van Berchem," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1963): 117-18; Solange Ory, "Max van Berchem, Orientaliste," in *D'un Orient l'autre: Les métamorphoses succesives des perceptions et connaissances* (Paris, 1991), 2:11-24.

[16]Oxford, 1952-59.

unfortunately goes no further than 1326. Although he planned to cover the last two centuries of Mamluk architecture, he never got to it. Creswell knew no Arabic and he concentrated rather narrowly on dating and surveying the buildings he studied, leaving a mass of theoretical problems to be tackled by later scholars such as Michael Rogers, R. S. Humphreys, and Jonathan Bloom.[17]

The Anglo-French colonial moment in the Near East from ca. 1918 until, perhaps, the 1950s, made it relatively easy for European scholars to study the buildings, archaeological sites, and town plans of the region. Many of the early leading figures in these fields were French. France's historic mission in the Orient drew upon the crusading past to justify its reoccupation of a Syria in which so many Frenchmen had fought and died in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. From 1921 onwards France exercised a Mandate in Syria and set up an antiquities service which oversaw work done on both Muslim and Crusading architecture. Jean Sauvaget (1901-50) was the leading figure. "Beware of Sauvaget!" Creswell once warned Oleg Grabar. It was not just that Sauvaget was French (always a bad sign), but also that Sauvaget had ideas (also always a bad sign). The classic theory of the "Islamic city" was first developed by the French in Algeria, and then exported to Syria—where Sauvaget was its main exponent. Sauvaget was obsessed with the *Nachleben* of Antiquity. He wanted to find Rome in Damascus and in Lattakia and elsewhere. Naturally the main focus of his interest was in Umayyad Syria, but he was more generally interested in the notion of the "Islamic city." In his work on "the silent web of Islamic history," he treated buildings as texts (and really only as texts, for, like Creswell, he had a healthy dislike for art historians). As for texts, Sauvaget (like Claude Cahen a little later) placed great stress on understanding the sources of one's sources, or, to put it another way, it was not enough to parrot the information of late compilators like Ibn al-Athīr or al-Maqrīzī. Sauvaget also did a lot to draw local histories into consideration.

Sauvaget's main work, *Alep: essai sur le développement d'une grande ville syrienne des origines au milieu du xixe siècle*,[18] is the "sad" story of the late antique city's failure to preserve itself from later encroachments and its ultimate breakdown, into quarters based on tribes, crafts, and what have you. Although Aleppo experienced a partial revival in the Mamluk period, this could not be credited to the Mamluks. Rather, both Aleppo and Damascus owed their prosperity to their trade with Venice (as well as, perhaps, the collapse of Genoese trading operations in the Black Sea). Sauvaget was always conscious of the need to place his various urban studies in a broader Mediterranean context. His study of quarters

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[17] *Studies in Islamic Architecture in Honour of Professor K. A. C. Creswell* (Cairo, 1955); Michael Rogers, "Creswell's Reading and Methods," *Muqarnas* 8 (1991): 45-54.

[18] Paris, 1941.

of Syrian cities led him to present a mosaic view of Islamic cities. He looked in vain for strong cohesive urban institutions. What little unity the Syrian cities possessed depended on the walls, the cathedral mosque, and the central souk.

Sauvaget's *La poste aux chevaux dans l'empire des mamelouks*[19] was a prime example of history with one's boots on and of matching buildings to documents. As Ayalon noted in his encomium of the work and the man, Sauvaget was attracted to the Mamluk period by the comparative wealth of sources which he described as "rich, variegated and dependable of such a kind that no praise of them can be too high." Ayalon commented on this observation of Sauvaget's, remarking that it was "no hyperbole to say that those sources make it possible to write scores, if not hundreds, of works of research of the highest order, on subjects concerning which, when other periods of Islam are in question, only a few sentences can be indited, and that after Herculean scientific labours."[20] (Following this last insight, it seems clear that Ayalon himself and other researchers in the history of Islamic institutions have pitched their research tents in Mamluk pastures because the sources are so rich. However much one might want to know about, say, the Abbasid *barīd* or the Umayyad fisc, it is really only in the Mamluk period that sufficient source material comes easily to hand.)

Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes (1862-1957), another of van Berchem's students, spread his researches quite widely (including a translation of a Maghribi version of *The One Thousand and One Nights*), but his main interests were philological and institutional and these preoccupations shaped his *La Syrie à l'epoque des mamelouks*,[21] in which he sought to set out the terminology of office holding and the formal functions of those offices as set out in the chancery treatises of the period. It would be left to Ayalon to flesh out Gaudefroy-Demombynes's account by drawing on chronicles and other sources in order to establish the real functions of officers whose formal duties had been set out by al-Qalqashandī and others and then annotated by Gaudefroy-Demombynes.

Early studies tended to be weighted towards the early Mamluk period, because this was when the Mamluks fought the Crusaders. But the gloomy paradox here is that people who studied the Baḥrī Mamluk period tended to use chronicles from the Circassian period, because the latter were more compendious. Popper's work in editing and translating the later sections of Ibn Taghrībirdī's *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, as well as his *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr* and related publications, ought to have had the effect of directing attention to the Circassian period. But it did not—at first at least. Even though William Popper (1874-1963) published a great deal on the

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[19]Paris, 1941.

[20]David Ayalon, "On One of the Works of Jean Sauvaget," *Israel Oriental Studies* 1 (1971): 302.

[21]Paris, 1923.

Circassian Mamluks, he was not a pure Mamlukist, for he had other interests and did major work on the Prophet Isaiah.

Hitherto the primary impetus in Mamluk studies had consisted of the amassing, translating, and editing of material bearing on the Mamluks. Israeli scholars pioneered a more interpretative approach. Some particularly bold interpretations of various features of Mamluk society were put forward by A. N. Poliak in his *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon (1250-1900).* This short book was one of the most determined, but least successful, attempts to present the Mamluks as chivalrous feudatories. Amirs were "knights," they were "dubbed" by the sultan or his vice-regent and they held "fiefs." Error crowded upon misjudgment in Poliak's dense pages. The sultan was elected by an electoral college.[22] The *al-ajnād al-qarānīs* were Caucasian noblemen who had not yet been dubbed amirs.[23] "The feudal aristocracy" settled their lawsuits according to rules based on the Great *Yāsa* of Chingiz Khan.[24] *Futūwah* was an order of knights devoted to Muḥammad's posterity.[25] The ruler of the Golden Horde was the suzerain of the Mamluk sultan.[26]

Poliak's various articles repeated these errors and disseminated new ones. For example, in an article on the impact of the Mongol *Yāsa* on the Mamluk Sultanate, Poliak suggested that Mongol immigrants to the Mamluk realm enjoyed an especially high status. Also that "knights" who had never been slaves held themselves to be superior to Mamluks. Also that the Mamluks' subjects welcomed the Ottoman invasion, because it meant liberation from the yoke of the *Yāsa* and a return to *'adl.*[27] Much of Poliak's work was carefully dismantled by Ayalon, who observed that the "late P. had the genius of putting his finger on crucial problems. His solutions to these problems, however, which were guided more by quick intuition than by thorough and dispassionate examination of the source material, proved to be, unfortunately, too often, wide of the mark."[28] Elsewhere Ayalon, writing about Poliak's erroneous population estimates for the medieval Near East, described him

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[22]A. N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon (1250-1900)* (London, 1939), 1.

[23]Ibid., 2.

[24]Ibid., 14-15.

[25]Ibid., 15.

[26]Ibid., 16-17 n.

[27]Poliak, "The Influence of Chingiz Khan's *Yasa* upon the General Organization of the Mamluk State," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10 (1942): 862-76.

[28]David Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khan: A Re-examination; part C_1, The Position of the Yāsa in the Mamluk Sultanate," *Studia Islamica* 36 (1972): 137.

as "a misguided genius."[29] It is indeed rare to see a work of apparent scholarship become so thoroughly superseded.

Some of Poliak's notions, particularly concerning Middle Eastern feudalism and the size of the population of Egypt and Syria, were uncritically echoed by Ashtor. Eliyahu Strauss, later Eliyahu Ashtor (1914-84), first worked on Mamluk manuscript sources in the Vienna library and, even before he left Austria at the time of the *Anschluss*, he had produced a dissertation on Baybars al-Manṣūrī and Ibn al-Furāt. In early articles on the Arabic historians who wrote in the Mamluk period, he compared their writings unfavorably to Europeans writing in a humanist tradition—such as Suetonius. However, Ashtor's hatred was reserved for the Mamluks themselves—corrupt, backward, violent, parasitic feudatories. I do not know, but I wonder if he thought of the Mamluks as the Nazis of the medieval Near East.

By contrast, Ashtor identified first with the Middle Eastern bourgeoisie who struggled as best they could to get along under the alien oppressors and secondly he sympathized with the European, mostly Venetian, traders who came to do business with the Mamluks. In Ashtor's vision of the social history of the region, there was a "bourgeois moment" around the second half of the eleventh century in such merchant republics as Tyre and Tripoli. Thereafter, however, the region was subjected to increasing militarization. Ashtor's *A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages* presented a remarkably consistent picture of Syria and Egypt in this period as prey to the ravages of predatory feudatories and already (but surely prematurely?) part of the Third World. Every earthquake, flood, pestilence, and instance of banditry or unjust taxation was lovingly added to Ashtor's gloomy record. (Inconsistently he also, following Poliak, treated the Baḥrī period as one of demographic growth and monetary stability.) The intervention of the military in industry and commerce stifled technological innovation. Their control of the cities prevented the development of urban autonomy and communal institutions of the "proper" sort that one found in medieval Europe. "The flourishing economy of the Near East had been ruined by the rapacious military, and its great civilizing achievements had been destroyed through inability to adopt new methods of production and new ways of life."[30]

In *Levant Trade in The Later Middle Ages*[31] Ashtor concentrated on the commercial and diplomatic toings and froings between the Mamluk Sultanate and

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[29]Ayalon, "Regarding Population Estimates in the Countries of Medieval Islam," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 28 (1985): 16.

[30]Eliyahu Ashtor, *A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1976), 331.

[31]Princeton, 1983.

the Republic of Venice from the 1340s onwards. The two did not enjoy an easy relationship and recriminations were frequent. What is remarkable about Ashtor's account of the bickering is that in every single case he accepted Venetian complaints about Mamluk monopolies, corruption, etc., etc., while rejecting out of hand Mamluk complaints about Venetian short-changing, piracy, etc., etc. Another obvious criticism that can be made of Ashtor's commercial history is that he grossly underestimated the scale of Genoese trade with the Levant. Although Ashtor was certain that the Mamluk sultans' monopolies were a bad thing, some historians would argue that those monopolies explain the fifteenth-century revival of the sultanate—a revival which was invisible to Ashtor. Ashtor's views about the technological and industrial failure of the Mamluk Sultanate have received some support from the findings of art historians who have worked on glass and metalwork. Certainly it would seem that in the fifteenth century Venice was exporting to Egypt and Syria the sort of high-quality painted and enamelled glass which it had formerly imported from those regions.[32] However, the so-called "Veneto-Saracenic" ware has recently been firmly reascribed to Middle Eastern workshops.[33] But, to come back to *Levant Trade* itself, this and related articles by Ashtor did have the definite merit of stressing the economic importance of such local products as cotton, Syrian silk, sugar, and soap. Some earlier books had treated the sultanate as if it were a mere conduit for silks and spices from further East.

Ashtor's findings were much criticized in his lifetime and subsequently. Several scholars were unhappy with his handling of data and his fondness for tables of prices and salaries in which the unlike tended to be bundled in with the like. As we shall see, Jean-Claude Garcin was critical of Ashtor's view of Mamluks as agents of stagnation. Janet Abu-Lughod has had similar doubts about Mamluk monopolies causing technological stagnation. As she put it, Ashtor consistently "blames the victim."[34] Abu-Lughod and other economic historians have preferred to stress such factors as the cumulative impact of Venetian commercial aggression, the Black Death, and Tīmūr's invasion of the Near East. Moreover, though Ashtor blamed the Mamluk sultans, especially Barsbāy, for the extinction of the Kārimī corporation of spice merchants, Gaston Wiet's listing of known Kārimīs showed

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[32]On this, see Rachel Ward, ed., *Gilded and Enamelled Glass from the Middle East* (London, 1998).

[33]Rachel Ward, Susan la Niece, Duncan Hook, and Raymond White, "'Veneto-Saracenic' Metalwork: An Analysis of the Bowls and Incense Burners in the British Museum," in Duncan R. Hook and David R. M. Gaimster, eds., *Trade and Discovery: The Scientific Study of Artefacts from Post-Mediaeval Europe and Beyond*, Occasional Paper 109 (London, 1995), 235-58.

[34]Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (Oxford, 1989), 233.

that they were still trading in the fifteenth century. These and other criticisms notwithstanding, Ashtor was a considerable figure, not just in Mamluk studies, but also as an authority on the history of the Jews under Islam.

Ashtor's reputation in the field has, I guess, only been surpassed by that of another Israeli, the late, great David Ayalon (1914-1998).[35] Ayalon's earliest work was an important and still constantly used Arabic-Hebrew dictionary. In his later years he became fascinated by the history of terminology for eunuchs in the medieval Islamic lands. In the years between the dictionary and the eunuchs, however (from the 1950s onwards), he devoted himself obsessively to the military caste of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria. He put the Mamluks on the historians' map. He has done more than anyone else to explain how the system worked and to demolish outdated misconceptions. From the beginning of his researches, Ayalon was aware of Ibn Khaldūn's view of the Mamluks and regarded it as cogent. While Ayalon was working on his doctorate, he had come across a key passage in the *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, in which Ibn Khaldūn discussed Turks and the mamluk institution. Ibn Khaldūn regarded the mamluk institution as a very good thing indeed: "This status of slavery is indeed a blessing . . . from Divine Providence. They embrace Islam with the determination of true believers, while yet retaining their nomadic virtues, which are undefiled by vile nature, unmixed with the filth of lustful pleasures, unmarred by the habits of civilizations, with their youthful strength unshattered by excess of luxury."[36] Time and again Ayalon returned to these Khaldunian themes: the resort to the import of mamluks as the salvation of Islam and most specifically the salvation of Egypt and Syria from the Mongols and Crusaders, the mamluks' retention of nomadic virtues, most notably that of *'iṣābah*, which in a mamluk context was replaced by the artificial bonding of *khushdashīyah*, and, finally, the effectiveness of the Mamluk system in breaking free from the otherwise doomed cycle of dynastic decay which Ibn Khaldūn had perceived as operating everywhere else in Islamic history.

Ayalon, impressed by Ibn Khaldūn, took a much more favorable view of the military elite than most of his precursors and contemporaries, but still not all that favorable. Although Ayalon agreed with Ashtor on very little, he did agree that their military and conservative cast of mind militated against innovation. This particularly comes out in *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society*.[37] This book has had a massive influence on

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[35]On the life and works of Ayalon, see Reuven Amitai, "David Ayalon, 1914-1998," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 3 (1999): 1-12.

[36]Quoted in David Ayalon, "Mamlukiyyāt: (B) Ibn Khaldūn's view of the Mamlūk Phenomenon," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2 (1980): 345.

[37]London, 1956.

historians working within and beyond the field—in shaping an image of hidebound chivalrous Mamluks doomed by new technology. But it is not his best work and recent studies by Carl Petry and Shai Har-El have chipped away at some of Ayalon's arguments. Har-El, in particular, has taken a more positive view of the Mamluks and their military response to the Ottomans. He argues that their main problem was lack of such resources as wood, iron, etc. Neither Petry nor Har-El seem to think that Mamluk defeat at the hands of the Ottomans was a foregone conclusion.

Ayalon's "Aspects of the Mamluk Phenomenon," published in *Der Islam* in 1977, stressed the essential continuity between the Ayyubid and Mamluk regimes, whereas the drift of R. S. Humpreys's "The Emergence of the Mamluk Army," which appeared in *Studia Islamica* in the same year, was to argue for distinct changes—for reforms taking place early on in the reign of Baybars. Ayalon was to reply to Humphreys in an article in the *Revue des études islamiques* in 1981. The heart of their disagreement concerned the specific problem of the continuity of the *ḥalqah* in any but a merely verbal form. There was also the issue of the chronology of the establishment of a three-tier officer class. Ayalon's arguments for continuity were detailed and ingenious and it is certainly true that if, say, Baybars carried out a sweeping program of reform, there is little direct evidence for it. Even so, I believe that Humphreys has carried the day, particularly on the decline of the *ḥalqah* from an Ayyubid elite force to a poorly rewarded kind of auxiliary arm of the Mamluk army.

In 1968 Ayalon published an article on "The Muslim City and the Mamluk Military Aristocracy." Although it was published the year after Lapidus's *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, Ayalon's article had presumably been in press too long to take account of Lapidus's arguments. Certainly its conclusions were very different from those of Lapidus (to which we shall come). Ayalon placed heavy emphasis on the alienness and social isolation of the mamluks. The mamluks, immured in the Citadel, were more or less immune from contaminating and weakening contact with Cairo's citizens. Only in one very striking way did they involve themselves in the life of the city and that was in the endowment of mosques, madrasahs and *khānqāh*s. And here again Ayalon drew attention to Ibn Khaldūn's reflections on the matter. Ibn Khaldūn was inclined to see the buildings as the outcome of the amirs' desire to protect their wealth and to ensure its transmission to their descendants by creating *waqf*s. Having emphasized the isolation of the military from the civil, Ayalon did go on to note that Syria seemed to be different, but he left the matter there. He was never so interested in Syria as in Egypt, a bias which, to some extent, unbalances his presentation of the *ḥalqah* elsewhere. (While on the subject of the relative importance of Egypt and Syria, Garcin has argued, rightly I think, that whereas Syria was hardly more than

Egypt's protective glacis in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, thereafter its economic and political importance increases vastly.[38] It is an argument which fits smoothly with Sauvaget's findings about the revival of Damascus and Aleppo in the later Middle Ages.)

Ayalon had rightly stressed the urban nature of Mamluk power. Ashtor had asked himself why Middle Eastern cities were not successful in developing durable autonomous institutions. Both these matters were taken up in Ira Marvin Lapidus's *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages.*[39] Unlike most of its precursors and some of its successors in Mamluk studies, Lapidus's book was problem-oriented and it addressed a wider audience than just Mamlukists. The Syrian cities of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries were special cases of the perceived problem of the "Islamic city"—a problem which had attracted not only Sauvaget, but also Massignon and others earlier in the century. The "Islamic city" notoriously failed to preserve such features as the agora, the theaters, and the wide straight streets which had distinguished its antique precursor. Not only this but the "Islamic City" failed to grow up into something like a European city and free itself from feudal control. Lapidus's version of how the Mamluks existed in the city contrasted quite strongly with that of Ayalon. Whereas Ayalon effectively imprisoned the military in the Citadel, Lapidus showed them intervening in every aspect of urban life. In large measure, the Mamluks oversaw the provisioning of the cities. More generally, they acted as mediators between town and countryside. And "the mamluk household was a means of transforming public into private powers and state authority into personal authority."[40] Mamluks were commercial entrepreneurs and the bourgeois who competed against them did so at a disadvantage. At another level the Mamluks opened their purses to such ruffian rabble as the *ḥarāfīsh*.

It was not only the *ḥarāfīsh* who were prepared to sell themselves for Mamluk *dīnār*s. The ulama did the same and much of *Muslim Cities* is devoted to this *trahison des clercs.* The book is above all a study in the power of patronage. The Mamluks, acting out of individual and corporate self-interest, set up *waqf*s for mosques, madrasahs, *khānqāh*s and similar institutions and the civilian elite competed for stipends at these places. Having sold themselves in this manner, the ulama then served as go-betweens or mediators between the military and the urban masses. Everybody lived cheek-by-jowl in these cities and, outside the army and palace, there was little in the way of formal hierarchy. Civic affairs were managed by means which were effective though informal, without recourse

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[38]Garcin, "Pour un recours à l'histoire de l'espace vécu dans l'étude de l'Egypte Arabe," *Annales-Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 35 (1980): 436-51.

[39]Cambridge, MA, 1967.

[40]Ibid., 48-50.

to chambers of aldermen or guilds. *Muslim Cities* has been widely and rightly praised.

At the same time, it attracted criticism and debate. Lapidus had studied the Mamluk city rather than the Muslim city. As a heuristic device, Lapidus had constructed a Weberian "ideal type" of Islamic city in order to compare it with the European city. But one might as well compare the cities Lapidus had studied with Samarkand, Tabriz, and Fez in the same period, for there were many significant dissimilarities. It was not even clear to what extent Lapidus's insights applied to Egyptian cities. He had sometimes had recourse to Egyptian data, but he did not come up with Egyptian conclusions. He had, on the whole, taken a synchronic approach to the subject, which meant that the book failed to register distinctly the impact on the Syrian cities of the Black Death or of the expansion of Venetian trade.

Lapidus (and others after him, including R. S. Humphreys) stressed the overwhelming role of Mamluk patronage. But it is natural for cultural historians to go looking for a role for the bourgeoisie here. (After all, most historians these days have bourgeois origins and therefore there is perhaps a certain *parti pris*.) Oleg Grabar has argued that what little evidence we have suggests that the bourgeois were the chief patrons of the illustrated *Maqāmāt*s which are such a feature of the age. Less plausibly, Grabar has assigned a role for the bourgeois in the construction of the Sultan Ḥasan Mosque. How, he asked, did such a very weak ruler as al-Nāṣir Ḥasan find the resources to build the greatest madrasah in Cairo? Grabar suggested that the grand bourgeoisie was the real builders. The Mamluks were in shaky control whereas the urban bourgeoisie "had considerable financial and bureaucratic power within the state." (It is not an argument which has much in the way of evidence to recommend it.) Once built, the Sultan Ḥasan Mosque became a monument for popular piety and a focus for legend.[41]

In 1974 at the request of MESA, Albert Hourani prepared a report on "The Present State of Islamic and Middle Eastern Historiography." Hourani's *tour d'horizon* is full of interest, but I restrict myself here to what he said about Mamluk studies: "for the Mamluks of Egypt even the basic institution, the military society, has not yet been studied, although Ayalon has laid very solid foundations and Darrag has studied one reign in depth."[42] Hourani based himself on the *Gunpowder* monograph plus "Studies in the Structure of the Mamluk Army" and I rather feel he underestimated the scope of Ayalon's publications. Additionally,

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[41]Oleg Grabar in J. R. Hayes, ed., *The Genius of Arab Civilization: Source of Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), 108.

[42]Albert Hourani, "The Present State of Islamic and Middle Eastern Historiography," reprinted in idem, *Europe and the Middle East*, 176.

Lapidus's *Muslim Cities* was referred to by Hourani in the context of urban studies and the study of ideal types in Islamic culture.

Well, that was how it looked in 1974. By then however important works on source criticism had already appeared, of which Hourani had taken no account: Donald Little's *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography*[43] and Ulrich Haarmann's *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit.*[44] Of course, a good deal of work on identifying, editing, and translating thirteenth-century sources had already been done by Claude Cahen. Cahen indeed criticized Little's sampling method and the conclusions which Little derived from it regarding the alleged dependence of Yunīnī on al-Jazarī.[45] Indeed, quite how complex the relationship was between the two historians has been brought out by more recent research by Li Guo. But Little's research led him on to wider issues than source dependence. His investigation of the varying accounts of the career of Qarāsunqur, the Mamluk defector to the Mongols, led him on to investigate other connections between the Mongols and the Mamluks. Little's book was downbeat about history writing in the Mamluk period. We have copious chronicles, but they are carelessly put together, they plagiarize one another, and most of the time they are frankly dull.

I should like to linger on Ulrich Haarmann, whose *Quellenstudien* and whose articles—on the literarization of history writing, on the appearance of Turco-Mongol folklore in chronicles, on the culture of the amirs and of the *awlād al-nās*, and on Pharaonic elements in Egyptian culture—I personally have found the most stimulating things to have been produced in the field. (It is not easy for me to be stimulated in German, as the stimulation has to be mediated by a dictionary, even so . . .) I believe that Haarmann's ideas on the literarization of chronicle-writing have influenced everyone who has since written on the historiography of the age. Even more important, his work on the libraries of the great amirs and on the civilian career-patterns of the *awlād al-nās* has permitted a more nuanced view of the ruling elite and softened the stark contrast between the Men of the Sword and the Men of the Pen. Haarmann's researches into the literary attainments of the Mamluks and their children have been given further support in work done by, among others, Barbara Flemming and Jonathan Berkey. Haarmann's work on source criticism was taken further by his own students, Samira Kortantamer, Barbara Langner, and Barbara Schäfer among them.

The beginning of the 1980s was when Mamluk studies really took off—and when non-Mamlukists started to take an interest. As William Muir had observed almost a hundred years earlier, the prolonged Mamluk domination of Egypt "must

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[43]Wiesbaden, 1970.

[44]Freiburg im Breisgau, 1969.

[45]In a review published by Cahen in *JESHO* 15 (1972): 223-25.

still remain one of the strange and undecipherable phenomena in that land of many mysteries."[46] In the 1980s several scholars tried their hand at cracking the mystery. In *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*,[47] Patricia Crone, having argued that the mamluks were a distinctively Islamic phenomenon, went on to ask why this was the case. Her (somewhat moralistic) conclusion was that the mamluks were the product of the failure of the Islamic *ummah* to arrange its affairs according to the ideal program of the shari'ah. The mamluks were a kind of punishment for political sin. In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn had argued that Muslims had failed to follow the shari'ah perfectly and their political regimes thereby become prey to cyclical decline and fall. The influence of Ibn Khaldūn pervades *Slaves on Horses*. Crone was trying to explain the general phenomenon of the slave soldiers throughout Islamic history. However, she did note the special features of the Mamluk regime in Egypt and Syria. She took the (surely exaggerated) view that the Egyptian Mamluk system only worked when there was an external threat; otherwise it degenerated into a civil war. The Mamluks were predatory shepherds. (The shepherd image comes, I think, from Ottoman political theory.) Finally Crone stressed the comfortable symbiosis between Mamluks and ulama and how the Mamluks were seen by their subjects as the providential protagonists of the jihad—again very Khaldunian.

Daniel Pipes' *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The Genesis of a Military System*[48] appeared just a year later. Pipes' view of the problem was similar, though different. Mamluks and other marginal troops rushed in to fill a politico-military vacuum, that vacuum having been created by the withdrawal from public affairs of other Muslims. The withdrawal from public affairs of these *fainéant* Muslims was the product of their disillusion at their failure to implement the Islamicate ideal. As the use of "Islamicate" indicates, Pipes was somewhat influenced by Marshall Hodgson. Ibn Khaldūn's influence is equally evident, but, whereas Ibn Khaldūn had argued that renewed imports of mamluks served to infuse the ruling regime with fresh nomadic vigor, Pipes argued that it was because of the unreliability of such troops that they kept having to be replaced. The notion of Mamluks as a punishment for perceived failure to live up to Islamic ideals is a curious one. Papal and Imperial theorists in Christendom also had unreal and idealistic notions of government—and most Christians probably did not care about those ideals nor did they wish to be involved in politics. But only the medieval German *ministeriales* look anything like mamluks.

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[46]Muir, *The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty*, 221.

[47]Cambridge, 1980.

[48]New Haven, 1981.

Garcin took a particularly critical view of Pipes' ideas (and come to that, of Ashtor's as well) concerning the Mamluks as a response to failure of civil society and as agents of a technical and cultural "blockage" in the Middle East. He was sceptical too about Crone's condemnatory view that the mamluk institution "bespeaks a moral gap of such dimensions that within the great civilizations it has been found only in one."[49] Garcin was disinclined to indict the Mamluks as agents of "blockage." Instead he adduced such factors as demographic decline and lack of resources. He also gave consideration to the possible role of the Bedouin in the "blockage." Garcin's contrasting perspective derived from his previous research on Upper Egypt and his *magnum opus*, *Un centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūṣ*.[50] The latter is a grand work in the *Annales* tradition, an *oeuvre de longue haleine*, which drew on a remarkably wide range of sources and which gave full weight to topographic, demographic, economic, tribal, and even folkloric matters. Garcin viewed the politics of the Cairo Citadel from the perspective of the provinces. As an *Annales* historian, he paid far more attention to long-term trends, demographic factors, and shifts in trade routes than he did to personalities and dramatic incidents. Like the citizens of medieval Qūṣ (I guess) he was inclined to see the Bedouin as more of a problem than the Mamluks, though, of course, the Bedouin were also integral to the economy of the region. It seems likely that al-Suyūṭī played a larger role than Ibn Khaldūn in forming Garcin's idea of the Mamluks.

As already noted, the early 1980s were the time when Mamluk studies really accelerated. The Washington exhibition of Mamluk art in 1981 provided some of the stimulus for this lift-off. Esin Atıl produced an admirable catalogue for the exhibition —admirable, that is, except for the title: *Renaissance of Islam*. The notion that one is dealing with a "rebirth" in this context is quite strange. True, it is possible to find antiquarian features, or backward-looking references, in certain Mamluk buildings and artifacts. (For example, Jonathan Bloom has shown how the Mosque of Baybars harks back to that of the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amrillāh, while Bernard O'Kane has argued that some Mamluk buildings were built in conscious emulation of Abbasid precursors.) In general, however, it is striking how Mamluk art broke with past precedents and even with the immediate precedent of Ayyubid art. Thus it is usually easy to distinguish Mamluk metalwork from Ayyubid metalwork. In architecture, to take another example, Mamluk patrons eschewed the Ayyubid preference for the free-standing mosque. The carving up of

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[49]Garcin, "The Mamluk Military System and the Blocking of Medieval Moslem Society," in Jean Baechler, John A. Hall, and Michael Mann, eds., *Europe and the Rise of Capitalism* (Oxford, 1988), 113-30.

[50]Paris, 1976.

art history on dynastic lines may be questionable, but in the particular case of the Mamluks it may be justified, because the patronage and taste of the court and those in the immediate service of the court seem to dominate the work produced.

Atıl's catalogue was not the only fruit of the Washington exhibition. There was also a concurrent conference, the first conference ever to be devoted to the specific topic of the Mamluks. Its proceedings were published as a special issue of *Muqarnas*.[51] The *Muqarnas* papers were topped and tailed by the broad-sweep papers of Grabar and Lapidus. The former reflected on the cohesiveness of Mamluk art, while the latter's manifesto urged historians of Mamluk art to snatch leaves from Michael Baxandall's certainly quite wonderful *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*.[52] As Lapidus noted, Baxandall's was "an approach to art history that seeks out the mentality and culture of peoples from a study of their art." It drew on a remarkably wide range of sources, including dance manuals and treatises on barrel-gauging, in an attempt to establish how fifteenth-century Italians looked at paintings, how they verbalized their responses, and the mechanics of how artists actually set about their work. It is an inspiring book, but, alas, I do not think that it has yet inspired anyone working on the arts under the Mamluks.

My own view is that art history and socio-political history are false friends, in the sense that they have not yet given each other much assistance. Take the Saint Louis Baptistery, which, with its wealth of iconographic detail including heraldry, should be easy to date. In a meticulous yet probably mistaken study, David Storm Rice assigned the Baptistery to the patronage of the amir Salār, ca. 1290-1310. Rice's dating has recently been hesitantly accepted by Bloom and Blair and they argue that it could not have been made for the open market. However, Elfriede R. Knauer contends that the Baptistery was made in the reign of Baybars, and so does Doris Behrens-Abouseif, although she adduces different arguments for this dating. However, Rachel Ward is about to demonstrate (I think) that it was made late in the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad for the European export market. Arguments about the date and provenance of the Baptistery and other objects rely in part on blazons. In Rice's time the way Mamluk heraldry worked was poorly understood. Since then, thanks to articles by Michael Meinecke and Estelle Whelan, we now have a much better notion of how Mamluk heraldry worked.

To take another example, Mamluk carpets are among the most controversial objects in the field of Islamic art. These exquisite textiles seem to have no real precursors in medieval Egyptian art and there is hardly any textual evidence. There is no consensus about where the carpets were made, when they were made, or why they were made. Although many scholars believe that they were woven in

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[51]Vol. 2 (1984).

[52]Oxford, 1972.

Cairo under the patronage of the Mamluk sultans, others have argued that these carpets may have been produced in North Africa, Syria, or Anatolia. Some believe that production started in the late fifteenth century (and hence the appearance of Qāytbāy's blazon on one of them), but others argue that they only begin to be produced after 1517. They may have been produced for the Mamluk court; then again it is possible that they were chiefly exported to the west. The significance of the elaborate octagonal design is inevitably also controversial. The carpets were manufactured while the chroniclers' backs were turned and out of sight of the eyes of European visitors.

There are exceptions to the lack of success in matching objects to documents—Nasser Rabbat's recent monograph on the Citadel makes exemplary use of both documentary and non-documentary sources. In general, Mamluk architectural history is relatively well mapped. In Cairo, this has been the work first of Creswell and his student Christel Kessler and more recently the work of Michael Meinecke (d. 1995), as well as the work on domestic architecture by Garcin, Jacques Revault, and Bernard Maury. Consequently, Cairo is the most thoroughly studied of all Muslim cities. Jerusalem has also benefited from a meticulous survey by Michael Burgoyne and historical research by Donald Richards. Yet, despite their work and despite the work of Donald Little on the Ḥaram documents, it is curious and even a little dispiriting to consider how many gaps there are in the record of Mamluk Jerusalem. More theoretical and evaluative approaches to Mamluk architecture have tended to stress the importance of procession and ceremony, of boastfulness and statements of legitimation through the prosecution of the jihad in determining the forms of the grand Mamluk foundations. This sort of approach parallels work being done on Fatimid architecture and ceremonial. Examples for the Mamluk period include articles by Humphreys, Bernard O'Kane, and Doris Behrens-Abouseif. The scale of the Sultan Ḥasan Mosque and its possible models have attracted much attention (from Rogers, O'Kane, and others)—as has the financing of its building. Did "the inheritance effect," a hypothetical consequence of the Black Death, fund this massive architectural project? And, to look at another aspect of funding, did the building mania of al-Nāṣir Ḥasan and al-Nāṣir Muḥammad before him seriously contribute to the decline of the Mamluk Sultanate?

Mamluk madrasahs have inevitably attracted a lot of attention. There were after all so many of them. Some have followed Ibn Khaldūn in stressing the patronage of such institutions as a way for amirs to protect their incomes in the guise of *waqf*. However, Robert Hillenbrand's observation that the Ayyubids and Mamluks were, like the Pharaohs, obsessed with death is a fruitful one.[53] With this

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[53]Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh, 1994), 316.

death-consciousness in mind, Hillenbrand has presented madrasahs as primarily ways of "laundering" mausolea. That is to say the endowment of a religious college legitimized the placing of the patron's tomb within a religious enclosure. While on the subject of the purpose of madrasahs, there has also of course been debate on the importance or not of the teaching carried out in these institutions. It is possible to view the curriculum of the madrasah as a way of promoting and controlling Sunni orthodoxy and, also, as perhaps offering training of a sort to Arabs, some of whom would later enter state service. However, Michael Chamberlain in particular has argued that the madrasahs were primarily ways of managing property and money, and that teaching was carried out everywhere and anywhere, informally, without significantly depending on structured madrasah courses. It is possible that each madrasah will have to be studied on an individual basis, for some performed quite unexpected functions. Berkey noted that al-Ghawrī's "madrasah" had no teaching facilities at all and Hillenbrand has pointed out that the Mosque-Madrasah of Qarāsunqur was used by *barīd* couriers as a hostel en route to and from Syria.

Another major area of interest has been the role of immigrant craftsmen and the imitation of foreign models in both the architecture and the arts of the Mamluks. There are occasions when it would make more sense to reclassify "Mamluk art" as Saljuq, or Mosuli, or Ilkhanid, or Qaraqoyunlu art. Creswell, in particular, was fond of explaining developments in Egyptian architecture in terms of disasters elsewhere and the consequent incoming waves of refugee architects and craftsmen. There is plenty of evidence for the influence on Mamluk architecture of buildings in Anatolian towns as well as in Ilkhanid Sulṭānīyah and Tabriz. In other art forms, it is difficult to separate out Ilkhanid Mongol from Chinese influence (for example, the lifting of motifs from textiles imported from China). The question of Mongol influence on the arts shades into the question of Mongol influence on the Mamluks more generally—covering such matters as large-format Qurans, dress, folklore, the courier system, haircuts, the code of the *Yāsa*. The subject got off to a poor start with Poliak's essay. However, matters have since been put on a sounder footing by Michael Rogers, Ulrich Haarmann, Donald Little, and David Ayalon. Ayalon's articles on the Mongol *Yāsa* and related matters are fundamental. The weight of the evidence now suggests that the cultural influence of the Mongols on the Mamluk Sultanate was not a significant factor until the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.

The civilian elite has been another major focus of research—inevitably, since the sources are so rich (the civilian elite was very good at celebrating itself). Carl

Petry's *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages*[54] has taken apart the notion that there was a single civilian elite. Rather there was a threefold division into first, bureaucrats—often from Syria; secondly, jurist-scholars —from all over the Islamic world; and, thirdly, religious functionaries, who tended to come from Cairo and the Delta. As for Joseph H. Escovitz's *The Office of Qāḍī al-Quḍāt in Cairo under the Baḥrī Mamluks*,[55] it of course says many things, but the main thing I got from reading it was that it poured cold water on the notion of the qadis as spokesmen for the subjects of the Mamluks. The qadis accommodated themselves to the Mamluk regime and they handed down its decrees. They defended the interests of the civilian elite as best they could, but were on the whole oblivious to wider needs. Jonathan Berkey's survey of teaching establishments, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education*,[56] used both chronicles and *waqfiyah*s to study the way that the religious sciences were taught and showed how they were taught on an informal and personal basis. I have already mentioned Michael Chamberlain's view, put forward in *Knowledge and Social Practice in Damascus 1190-1350*,[57] that the madrasah was a conduit for managing property and paying stipends. Chamberlain has studied how a medieval society, by and large, managed without documents and, like Lapidus, he has emphasized how informal ways of getting things done compensated for a relative lack of hierarchy and formal institutions. However, Chamberlain does not believe that madrasahs were endowed in an effort to buy the ulama. In this he differs from, say, Fernandes, whose *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: The Khānqāh*[58] argued that *khānqāh*s were a way of, as it were, buying Sufis and controlling Sufism. One problem with all this research on the civilian elite is that only civilians of a certain class got into the biographical dictionaries of Ibn Ḥajar and al-Suyūṭī. Such works tell us very little indeed about merchants, poets, sorcerers, and most of the *awlād al-nās*.

The golden prime of the Mamluks in the late thirteenth century and their wars against the Crusaders and Mongols seems to be relatively uncontentious territory. The same cannot be said of the decline of the Mamluks and there is no agreement yet on when or why or even if the Mamluk Sultanate started declining. Ayalon's "The Muslim City and the Military Aristocracy" blamed it on decadent al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, the expensive and capricious harem, the failure to keep proper military discipline, and extravagant expenditure on building projects. This kind of approach

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[54]Princeton, 1981.

[55]Berlin, 1984.

[56]Princeton, 1992.

[57]Cambridge, 1994.

[58]Berlin, 1988.

has been echoed and underlined by Amalia Levanoni in her *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāsir Muḥammad Ibn Qalāwūn 1310-1341*.[59] She similarly found seeds of decline in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, though there are points of difference between her and Ayalon. Levanoni places less stress, I think, on the personal failings of the Qalawunid sultans. However, I think if one is looking for the causes of Mamluk collapse in the sixteenth century, then the 1330s is too early to start looking for it. It also seems rough to blame any of it on the royal princesses. I doubt if the cost of their dresses contributed much to the decay of one of the world's great medieval empires and I do not think we should encourage al-Maqrīzī and al-Suyūṭī in their misogyny.

Others have been disinclined to blame al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's alleged fecklessness and extravagance and they have looked for broader causes. For example, Rabbat's book on the Citadel suggests a more positive approach to the sultan's public works and attributes decline to international economic factors.[60] Similarly, Garcin, in his contribution to *Palais et maisons du Caire,* does not find fault with the sultan. Moreover, it must be asked, could things ever have gone all that well with the sultanate after the onset of the plague epidemics from 1347 onwards? Ayalon, himself, was the pioneer on the subject of the plague—in the first study he published in English on the Mamluks in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1946. Ayalon's article suggested that the declining quality of mamluk training and the breakdown in discipline were in large part a product of the need to recruit and train soldiers faster, because of losses due to plague. The few pages in A. L. Udovitch's incisive little essay "England to Egypt" devoted to the demographic and economic effects of the plague are hard to beat, as they demonstrate how demographic decline explains military rapacity, Bedouin incursions, and most of the rest of the problems of the later sultans. Subsequently Udovitch's student, Michael Dols, published *The Black Death in the Middle East*.[61] Dols, like Lapidus, was preoccupied by comparisons with Europe and he, as it were, constructed an ideal type of bubonic plague, in order to assess how Egypt's plague matched up with those of England and Italy. Anybody who might conceivably have been seduced by Poliak's notion that Egypt experienced a slow but steady demographic increase after 1348 would have been firmly disabused by Dols. And finally on plagues, Lawrence Conrad's more literary approach to chronicles which reported on them provides a necessary caution against believing that everything one reads

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[59]Leiden, 1995.

[60]Nasser O. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture* (Leiden, 1995), 242-43.

[61]Princeton, 1977.

on this matter is documentary fact.[62] Similarly Adel Allouche's introduction to his translation of the *Ighāthah* in *Mamluk Economics: A Study and Translation of al-Maqrizi's Ighāthah*[63] cautions against taking al-Maqrīzī to be an unprejudiced and reliable source on money matters. Religion took precedence over monetary theory in his muddled brain.

From decline one proceeds to doom. Until recently there was hardly anything to read on the last days of the sultanate. (Well, there was Stripling's old book.) Now we have Petry's two books, one by Har-El, and a number of other more specialized studies (for example, James B. Evrard's *Zur Geschichte Aleppos und Nordsyriens im letzen halben Jahrhundert der Mamlukenherrschaft (872-921 A.H), nach Arabischen und Italeinischen Quellen*[64]). Petry has emphasized the contrasting personalities of Qāytbāy, the dignified conservative, and Qānṣuh al-Ghawrī, the ruthless innovator. In some ways Petry is very hard on al-Ghawrī (for I think that anyone who has heard the penultimate sultan talking—as he does in the *Majālis* and the *Kawkab al-Durrī*—must admire him). But Petry's approach to al-Ghawrī is a useful corrective to Ayalon, who overdid the image of the last Mamluks as blinkered, chivalrous reactionaries. Petry's earlier article "A Paradox of Patronage during the Later Mamluk Period" on the coexistence of financial crisis and royal magnificence under Qāytbāy is cogent, for the question is well-put and persuasively answered. The trouble with studying the very last days is the paucity of Arabic sources. The way forward will, I think, depend on increasing use of European sources. Ulrich Haarmann's important recent article "Joseph's Law" makes strikingly effective use of Western sources. Evrard has similarly used Italian sources.

So now, what of the future? I think the main thing is to get away from the activity of studying whatever it is that the obvious sources (mostly chronicles and biographical dictionaries written by ulama) want to tell us. One way of doing this is by use of archives, but I am not clear how much more the Geniza and the Ḥaram al-Sharīf documents have to tell us. There is clearly more material in *waqfiyah*s to be worked on. Even so there are limits to this sort of evidence and several architectural historians have noted mismatches between an endowment's specifications and the building as actually built. Also, I feel that the study of *waqfiyah*s tips Mamluk studies even further in the direction of becoming ulama studies, at the expense of looking at the secular aspects of the age.

One way of getting away from the pious mutterings of the turbaned elite is to focus properly on the amirs. Reuven Amitai has already produced a prosoprographic

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[62]Lawrence Conrad, "Arabic Plague Chronologies and Treatises: Social and Historical Factors in the Formation of a Literary Genre," *Studia Islamica* 54 (1981): 51-93.

[63]Salt Lake City, 1994.

[64]Munich, 1974.

essay on the Ẓāhirī and Ṣāliḥī amirs and I have great expectations concerning the similar research he has in progress on Manṣūrī amirs and mamluks. Another way is to redirect attention to the marginals in Mamluk society. Paul Kahle, an obsessive collector of shadow-puppets, was a pioneer in this sort of territory, with his articles on shadow theatre and on gypsies. Poliak wrote on popular revolt and Brinner on the mysterious *ḥarāfīsh*. Much more recently we have had Boaz Shoshan on popular culture in general, Shmuel Moreh on live theatre, Carl Petry on crime, Everett Rowson on gay literature, and G. J. H Van Gelder on *Ḥalbat al-Kumayt* (an *adab* treatise on wine-drinking). Perhaps the biggest problem in dealing with popular culture is clearly separating it out from high culture. Consider the cult of the criminal and the mendicant among the literary elites in Abbasid and Buyid times. Where should one place Ibn Dāniyāl, the friend of the sultan and the amirs, but also the author of low-life shadow plays? Where should one place those wild Sufis with a following of riffraff, but who nevertheless found patronage and protection in the highest places? While on the subject of people who were neither amirs nor ulama, Huda Lutfi's "Manners and Customs of Fourteenth-Century Cairene Women: Female Anarchy versus Male Shar'i Order in Muslim Prescriptive Treatises" has shown how much interesting material about antinomian behavior can be derived from just Ibn al-Ḥājj's *Madkhal* alone. And, of course, we are likely to see a lot more published about Mamluk women in the near future.

A reasonable amount has been produced fairly recently on popular literature. There is more written on *The Thousand and One Nights* than one can shake a stick at. Malcolm Lyons, Remke Kruk, Harry Norris, and others have produced important works on the popular epics. However, as I see it, far too little work is being done in America or Europe on the high literature of the late Middle Ages—the *adab* and poetry. Emil Homerin is practically unique, as far as I know. Nothing is more likely to transform our perceptions of the Mamluk age than a detailed study of the belles-lettres of the period. But perhaps a forthcoming volume of the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature* will encourage researchers to venture into the *terra incognita* of Mamluk *adab*. And with reference to *terrae icognitae*, what about the Mamluks in the scramble for Africa? André Raymond has shown how much Cairo's prosperity under the Ottomans depended on trade with Black Africa—on the commerce in black slaves, gold, and other commodities.[65] It is also plausible then that the African trade may have been important in the Mamluk period also. On the subject of commerce and slave imports, I find it astonishing how little reference is made by Mamlukists to Charles Verlinden's various publications on the European trade in white slaves.[66]

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[65]Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle* (Damascus, 1974).

[66]See especially Charles Verlinden, *L'Esclavage dans l'Europe médiévale* (Ghent, 1977).

I have not discussed scholars working and publishing in the Arab world (though the names of Hassanein Rabie, Aḥmad ʻAbd al-Rāziq, Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām, Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid, Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn, and others come to mind). In sad practice, so much of Western research is conducted without reference to Arab work. This should change. But I have gone on long enough as it is. When I started as a student, there was hardly anything to read on the Mamluks, except what had been produced by the Israelis. Really one could read one's way through the field in a week. Now, though, there is a lifetime's reading awaiting your students. (Aren't they the lucky ones!) Israel is still an important place for Mamluk studies, as are Germany and France, but most of the work in the field is now being done in America. Compared with Fatimid, Saljuq, or Ayyubid studies, Mamluk studies is in great shape. It has its set-piece controversies, its website, its journal. You here at Chicago, at the center of Mamluk studies, should feel particularly cheerful. Even so most of one of the world's great empires still remains mysterious. "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."

XIV

ʿALĪ AL-BAGHDĀDĪ AND THE JOY OF MAMLUK SEX

ʿAlī al-Baghdādī wrote *Kitāb al-Ẓahr al-Anīq fi-Lubūs wa'l-Ta'nīq* ('The Book of Delicate Flowers regarding the Kiss and the Embrace') in Egypt some time in the fourteenth century. A manuscript of the fourteenth century survives in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris (De Slane Cat, Arabe 3671). It was presumably this manuscript which René Khawam used for his translation, *Les Fleurs éclatantes dans les baisers et l'accolement* (Paris, 1973), though he does not actually identify the source of his translation. Apart from Khawam's introduction to his translation, there is no secondary literature on ʿAlī al-Baghdādī, except for a couple of pages in Luce Lopez-Baralt's *Un Kama Sutra español* in which ʿAlī's book is one of the various works of erotica which Lopez-Baralt compares with his main text, a sixteenth-century Tunisian Morisco erotic treatise.[1]

ʿAlī al-Baghdādī was not a historian. However, what he wrote does have some historical interest. Almost nothing is known about Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAlī al-Baghdādī except what he tells us about himself in his own book. He flourished in Egypt in the 1340s and 1350s. He had a number of friends high up in the military hierarchy. He accompanied the Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn on his final trip out of Cairo to Upper Egypt. He was one of those responsible for dealing with the property of the intestate during the Black Death. Thinking of the Black Death, one thinks of Boccaccio and there are indeed resemblances and points of comparison between the *Decameron* and the *Ẓahr al-Anīq*. ʿAlī's book is a collection of twenty-five bawdy stories designed to illustrate the faithlessness, craft and malice of women. Such compilations are common in medieval Arabic literature.[2] However, what gives ʿAlī al-Baghdādī's work its special interest is that some at least of his stories are apparently told

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[1] L. Lopez-Baralt's *Un Kama Sutra español* (Madrid, 1992), 258–60. Lopez Baralt has perforce had to rely on Khawam's translation.

[2] For a discussion of some this literature, see F. Malti-Douglas, *Women's Body. Women's Word; Gender and Discourse in Arabo-Islamic Writing*, (Princeton, 1991).

by or about real historical figures in late-thirteenth century and early to mid-fourteenth-century Egypt and Syria.

A reliable source on the sexual lives of the Mamluk élite and of the people they governed would be welcome. Conventional chronicles were discreet on this sort of subject matter. They reported the occasional homosexual scandals—such as the Amir Taybughā al-Qāsimī's affair with a pretty young mamluk, or the powerful Amīr Sayf al-Dīn Almās's rape of a boy, or al-Nāṣir Aḥmad's affair with a Bedouin at Kerak.[3] It is curious that the chronicles are actually more forthcoming about homosexual liaisons than they are about heterosexual ones. Adultery seems to have been a taboo subject for al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrī Birdī and the other chroniclers. Nevertheless, though chronicles avoided the fraught topic of adultery, the notion that, for example, some women used going to the shops as a pretext for commencing adulterous affairs is not a theme which is confined to the stories of ʿAlī al-Baghdādī and *The Thousand and One Nights*. According to Ibn al-Ḥājj's moralising fourteenth-century treatise, the *Madkhal*, a shopkeeper "must be careful when a woman comes to buy something, to look at her behaviour, for if she was one of those women dressed up in delicate clothes, exposing her wrists, or some of her adornments, and speaking in a tender and soft voice, he should leave the selling transaction and give her his back until she leaves the shop peacefully . . ."[4] Al-Turkmānī's manual on *bidʿa* (unacceptable innovation) also warned against predatory female behaviour in various contexts.[5]

A collection of anecdotes that spilled the beans about the goings-on of the élite in the Mamluk Sultanate would be exciting. Would ʿAlī's book turn out to be the Islamic equivalent of the Venetian

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[3] Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *al-Nujūm al-Ẓāhira*, (Cairo, n.d.), ix, 114 and 301–2, Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-kāmina*, (Hyderabad, 1929–32), i, 294–5; c.f. ʿAbd al-Raziq, *La Femme au temps des Mamlouks en Egypte*, (Paris, 1973), 183. For the literary treatment of homosexuality in this period, see E.K. Rowson, "Two Homoerotic Narratives from Mamluk Literature: al-Safadi's *Law'at al-shākī* and Ibn Dāniyāl's *al-Mutayyam*", in J.W. Wright Jr. and Everett K. Rowson (edd.), *Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature*, (New York, 1997), 158–191.

[4] Huda Lutfi, "The Manners and Customs of Fourteenth Century Cairene Women: female anarchy versus male Sharīʿa order in Muslim prescriptive treatises", in N.R. Keddie and B. Baron (edd), *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*, (New Haven, 1991), 103–4.

[5] Idrīs b. Baydakīn al-Turkumānī, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fi'l-ḥawādith wa'l-bidʿa*, ed., Subhi Labib (Stuttgart, 1987), i, especially 194–202.

writer Aretino's *Ragionamenti* (1534–6)? In that work, Aretino used his pen to simultaneously scourge and entertain the society he lived in and he presented courtesans reminiscing about the lives and vices of named contemporary figures. In the Islamic world, from Umayyad times onwards, there had been a tradition of poets using *hijā'* and *sukhf* to blackmail money out of otherwise stingy patrons. Certainly, satirical poetry aimed at identified and well-known figures flourished in the Mamluk period. The author of shadow-plays, Ibn Dāniyāl, and the lewd poet, Ibn Sūdūn al-Bashbughāwī come immediately to mind here.[6] In the Ayyubid period, the satirical poet, al-Wahrānī, had portrayed the distinguished chancery man and poet 'Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī as a homosexual and as a man who drank wine from the navels of slave-girls at orgies.[7] Indeed, al-Wahrānī and Ibn Dāniyāl are among the select band of those mentioned by 'Alī in the preface to his book as being among his somewhat unsatisfactory predecessors. Those writers whom 'Alī picked out as intellectual ancestors are a raffish crew: apart from al-Wahrānī and Ibn Dāniyāl, they include Ibn Quzmān, the famous twelfth-century Cordovan poet of wine, women and song, Ibn al-Nāzir, the twelfth-century author of lost treatises on love and the etiquette of companionship, and Ibn Mawalāhum, the early fourteenth-century author of an artisanal *maqāma*, as well as several shadow plays. 'Alī al-Baghdādī found fault with his predecessors because their writings, unlike his, failed to focus on a single theme.[8]

In *A Turning Point in Mamluk History. The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Oalāwūn* (1310–1341), (Leiden, 1995), Amalia Levanoni has argued that the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad saw the beginning of the rot and that the roots of the decadence of the Mamluk

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[6] On Ibn Dāniyāl, see Ibn Dāniyāl, *Three Shadow Plays*, ed. P. Kahle, prepared by D. Hopwood and M. Badawi, (Cambridge, 1992). On Ibn Sūdūn, see F. Kern, "Neuere agyptische Humoristen und Satiriker", in *Mitteilungen des Seminars fur Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, 9 (1906), 31–73; A. Vrolijk, *Bringing a Laugh to a Scowling Face: a study and critical edition of the "Nuzhat al-nufūs wa-muḍhik al-'abūs" by 'Alī Ibn Sūdūn al-Basbugāwī (Cairo 810/1407 – Damascus 868/1464)*, (Leiden, 1998).

[7] M.C. Lyons and D.E.P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of the Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982), 118–9.

[8] al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Zahr*, f. 1a; *Les Fleurs*, 29. (Unfortunately, the Bibliotheque's numbering of the folios of the manuscript is inconsistent, a problem further compounded by the faintness of their registration on the microfilm which I was permitted to consult. I have therefore had to provide my own numbering of the folios and this only sometimes coincides with that on the erratically numbered original.)

Sultanate can be traced to the early decades of the fourteenth century. Traditions were undermined, discipline slackened and money was ostentatiously squandered. It was during the reigns of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and his sons and grandsons that royal women in particular got above themselves.[9] Some decades before Levanoni, David Ayalon had similarly identified effeminacy and the power of women at the court of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and his immediate successors as the root of the decline of the Mamluk Sultanate.[10] It would be agreeable then to find anecdotal confirmation of all this in ʿAlī—of the wives of mamluks and civilians feasting and fornicating when the writing was already on the wall for the once vigorous Mamluk Sultanate.

ʿAlī al-Baghdādī gets things right or, in some cases, if not verifiably right at least plausibly right. In the first adventure, a respectable amīrs wife confesses how as a girl she learned some seductively acrobatic tricks, involving a tambourine and some glasses from some slave women who had been presented by the ruler of Mardin to al-Ashraf of Homs in the early 1260s.[11] The next story is narrated by Badr al-Dīn b. al-Bannāʾ, an amīr who was in attendance on al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the 1320s.[12] The third story is told by a scribe of the famous amīr, Baysarī.[13] At the beginning of the fifth story, ʿAlī al-Baghdādī says he was in Damascus in 744, which, he says, at that time was governed by the Amīr Ṭuquzdamur—and that is correct.[14] The sixth adventure in Aleppo provides a quantity of circumstantial information about how the Nāṣirī *madrasa* was built on the site of a synagogue sequestered in 727/1326–7.[15] The man whom ʿAlī meets there, Yūsuf al-Qayrawānī, tells a story in which he stays with Bedouin on the Euphrates. Yūsuf stays with one of the Banū Muhannā clan—and that would be right too.[16] Two of the stories,

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[9] A. Levanoni, *A Turning Point in Mamluk History: The Third Reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Oalāwūn 1310–1341*, (Leiden, 1995), 184–192.

[10] D. Ayalon, "The Eunuchs in the Mamluk Sultanate", in ed. M. Rosen-Ayalon, *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, (Jerusalem, 1977), 267–295, esp. 287.

[11] al-Baghdādī, *Kītāb al-Zahr*, f. 6b, *Les Fleurs*, 39–40.

[12] al-Baghdādī, *Kītāb al-Zahr*, f. 6b, *Les Fleurs*, 41.

[13] al-Baghdādī, *Kītāb al-Zahr*, f. 9b, *Les Fleurs*, 47.

[14] al-Baghdādī, *Kītāb al-Zahr*, f. 19b, *Les Fleurs*, 63; c.f. Gaston Wiet, *Les Biographies du Manhal Ṣāfī = Memoires presentés a l'Intitut de l'Egypte*. 19 (Cairo, 1932), no. 1250.

[15] al-Baghdādī, *Kītāb al-Zahr*, f. 21b–22a, *Les Fleurs*, 67–8.

[16] On the Banū Muhannā, see D. Ayalon, "The System of Payment in Mamluk Military Society", *JESHO*, 1 (1958), 264–5.

the thirteenth and the twenty-third, marginally involve the management of *iqṭā'*s. Part of the action in the fourth story hinges on a corvée in which the Sultan summoned all carvers of amber up to the Citadel. In 749/1348–9, the year of the Plague, 'Alī tells us that he was working together with a Christian and a Jew in drawing up lists of the property of the intestate.[17] That would fit too, for the *Dīwān mawārith al-hashriyya* was very busy at that time and in Cairo and in Fustat, but not elsewhere, the relevant *dīwān*s had jurisdiction over Christian and Jewish, as well as Muslim property.[18]

In 738/1337–8 the narrator was with the Sultan when he went to Upper Egypt and he stopped off at Bahnasā where he heard yet more unedifying stories about the cunning of women.[19] 'Alī is one year out here, for, on the occasion of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad marrying two of his daughters to two of the Governor of Damascus, Tankiz's sons, the Sultan did go on an elaborate hunting trip to Upper Egypt, but it was in 739/1338–9.[20] In Bahnasā, 'Alī swapped experiences with the governor and his melancholy deputy. 'Alī describes himself as meeting the governor of Bahnasā and later the governor of Cairo, Bahā' al-Dīn Qarāqūsh.[21] Bahā' al-Dīn Qarāqūsh did indeed hold the offices which 'Alī ascribed to him.[22] The actual story told in the twenty-first chapter concerns the sexual and financial hunger of the Amir Sayf al-Dīn Qudayr when he was governor in Cairo in 726/1325–6. This amir can be identified as Sayf al-Qadūdār, whom al-Ṣafadī's biographical dictionary describes as having been governor of Cairo from 724 until 730.[23] The story about Qadūdār is told by aforementioned Qarāqūsh, who at the time was indeed one of the governor's deputies. In the twentieth of 'Alī's stories, a fuller is fooled into thinking that he is a soldier and so then he gets caught up in the mobilisation to meet the Mongol invasion of 1303.[24]

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[17] al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Zahr*, f. 80b; *Les Fleurs*, 174.
[18] M.W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East*, (Princeton, 1977), 175.
[19] al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Zahr*, f. 99a; *Les Fleurs*, 212.
[20] al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, ed. M.M. Ziada, (Cairo, 1934–58), ii, 461.
[21] al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Zahr* f. 99b; *Les Fleurs*, 212–3.
[22] J.-C. Garcin, *Un Centre Musulman de la Haute-Egypte Medievale: Qus*, (Paris, 1976), 193.
[23] al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī bi'l-wafayāt*, ed. H. Ritter et al. (Wiesbaden and Istanbul, 1931–), xxiv, 206.
[24] On this invasion, see R. Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382*, (Beckenham, Kent, 1986), 101.

However, despite all the authentic-looking detail, we do not need to take ʿAlī al Baghdādī very seriously as a source on contemporary scandals. On closer examination, some of his bawdy stories turn out to be hundreds of years old, while others may be thousands of years old. The second adventure relates how a wife, summoned to an immoral assignation, finds herself confronted by her husband, but she then manages to bluff her way out of it by claiming that she was only testing him. This is the second part of 'The Weeping Bitch' story and as such is found in the Seven Viziers cycle of stories and subsequently incorporated into the *Thousand and One Nights*.[25] The fourth adventure relates how a merchant came back from work early because the Sultan had commandeered his workers, who were carvers in amber for a special corvée. The adulterous wife, thus surprised, double-bluffs her way out of trouble by claiming that she has a lover hidden in the coffer at the end of the room. This seems so ridiculous for her to admit outright that the husband takes it as a joke and does not bother to look inside the coffer. Setting the detail of the Mamluk Sultan's corvée aside, this is essentially 'The Tailor and the Lady and the Captain' and it is found in some versions of the *Nights*.[26]

The Fifth Story, set in Damascus allegedly at the time when Ṭuquzdamur governed it, is about a woman who sleeps with a grocer in return for various commodities, but who ends up with sand in exchange for her troubles, but yet manages to talk her way out of it. This is essentially the same as 'The Story of the Wife and the Grocer' in *Syntipas* and in the *Nights*.[27] The Sixth Story features a man who has been compiling a comprehensive list of the ruses of women, but he is tricked out of it by a woman's ruse. A similar character appears in *Syntipas* (though the winning ruse is different).[28] ʿAlī al-Baghdādī's Fourteenth Story concerns a woman who has sex successively with a slave and his master and then, when her hus-

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[25] V. Chauvin, *Bibliographie des Ouvrages Arabes*, vol. 8, Syntipas, (Liege, 1904), 45, no. 13; "The Wife's Device to Cheat her Husband" in R. Burton, *A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights*, (Benares = Stoke Newington, London, 1885), vi, 152–5; R. Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion*, (Harmondsworth, 1994), 63–4.

[26] R. Burton, *Supplemental Nights*, vi, 263–9.

[27] Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 8, 42, no. 10; Burton, *Arabian Nights*, vi, 143–4, ("The Woman Who Made Her Husband Sift Dust").

[28] Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 8, 69 no. 34.

band returns, she explains their presence in the house. This story has a similar provenance.[29]

Doubtless precursors or parallels for most of 'Alī's stories can be found somewhere or other in the world's great story collections. Most of his tales are ancient folklore and, as such one can find some of them classified in Hasan El-Shamy's classification of Arab story-telling motifs. Mostly they fall within the range K1510 to K1550, 'Adulteress outwits husband'.[30] One can also find the same sort of material in Elisséeff's older classification of *Nights* stories in *Themes et motifs des Mille et Une Nuits*, under the headings 'Amoureux surpris en flagrant delit' and 'Mari trompé'.[31]

What is more, looking at the overtly Mamluk content of these stories, the chronology of some of them is slightly awkward. It is true that some of these chronological problems are only apparent, as they do not appear in the manuscript, but have been created by Khawam's mistranslation of key passages in the text. For example, the eleventh adventure allegedly happened in 1338 and features an aged bawd, Umm Sanjar, who, according to Khawam's translation, specialised in rendering services to, among others, most of the mamluks of the Sultan al-Sa'īd Berke Khan. By the 1330s this was a pretty elderly and, presumably, not very sexually active group of mamluks. In fact there is no reference to mamluks of al-Sa'īd Berke Khan in the manuscript. Rather the old woman acted as a bawd for amīrs, wealthy men (*al-su'adā*) and royal mamluks.[32] Another story apparently set in the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad features a merchant who made his fortune in the reign of al-Ṣāliḥ. Khawam identifies the latter with

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[29] Chauvin, *Bibliographie*, 38–9, no. 7; Burton, *Arabian Nights*, vi, 138–9.

[30] Hasan al-Shamy, *Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification* (Bloomington, 1995), 1, 247–9.

[31] N. Elisséeff, *Themes et Motifs des Mille et Une Nuits*, (Beirut, 1949), 91–2, 13g–40.

[32] al-Baghdādī, *Les Fleurs*, 102, c.f. *Kitāb al-Zahr* f. 40b. In general, Khawam's translation cannot be relied on for matters of detail. On p. 31 and p. 41 Shaykh al-birr has been translated as "le Cheikh de Bien". It would make more sense to translate this as Shaikh of the desert. On page 57 (corresponding to f. 16a) the Amīr Shikār, or Emir of the Hunt, of Qalāwūn, has been transformed by Khawam into Qalāwūn's private secretary. On p. 151 Khawam has 'Ahmad le Petit-Cheikh, palfrenier de Chams al-Dīne Sounqour al-Achqar, a l'époque de la royauté Nasiride'. However, the famous Amīr Sunqur al-Ashqar was not a contemporary of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. The manuscript (f. 59a) actually has Aḥmad al-Shuwaykh serving as *mihmandār*, or guest-master, to Sunqur al-Alfī. And so on.

the Sultan Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb (r. 1240–9).[33] It would be surprising to find such an apparently elderly merchant taking such a vigorous interest in the activities of his young wife. But the difficulty disappears if we identify 'Ṣāliḥ' with the Mamluk Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl (r. 1342–5) and this would give us a new terminus a quo for the writing of the *Zahr al-Anīq*.

Even so there are occasional anomalies in the opening story about the acrobatic lady with the glasses allegedly has her learning her arts in the 1260s. So, she would have been quite mature to be turning such agile tricks thirty years on. It is odd to find one of the mamluks featured in these stories called 'Izz al-Dīn Baktimur, rather than Sayf al-Dīn Baktimur which would have been a more normal coupling of *laqab* and *ism*.[34] So what is going on?

One of the attractive features of the Zahr al-Anīq is the way the locale for the narration of the story keeps shifting. The first one starts in Cairo. At the beginning of the second story we are introduced to one of Cairo's dining clubs. Various specific quarters of the city are referred to throughout the book. By the fifth adventure we are in Damascus. The sixth adventure is Aleppo. The eighth in Qayrawan. By the eleventh we are back in Cairo and in a quarter close to the Mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn. The twentieth is in Damascus, the twenty-first in Bahnasā. There is, of course a well-known precedent for this frequent shifting of fictional locales—in al-Hamadhānī's *Maqamāt* and in that of al-Ḥarīrī.[35] In moving his story around, 'Alī al-Baghdādī was following a well-established convention of Arabic fiction—as in so much else. The Wiles of Women was an important and popular genre of literature. It dominated the *Syntipas*, or Sindibad, cycle of stories. It was an important ingredient in the stories about the criminal activities of Crafty Dalilah in the *Nights*. The theme was not restricted to the Arab world. It dominated western fabliaux as well as medieval Indian fiction. It is hard now to understand the obsessive appeal of these stories about faithless, cunning wives. In modern British fiction it only finds echoes in Evelyn Waugh's

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[33] Khawam, *Les Fleurs*, 154.

[34] Khawam, *Les Fleurs*, 149.

[35] On the *Maqāmāt*s, see Abdelfattah Kilito, *Les Séances: Recits et codes culturels chez Hamadhani et Hariri*, (Paris, 1983) and A.F.L. Beeston, "Al-Hamadhānī, al-Ḥarīrī and the maqāmāt genre", in edd. J. Ashtiany et al. *'Abbasid Belles-Lettres*, (Cambridge, 1990), 125–135.

A Handful of Dust and, perhaps, in some of the novels of Julian Barnes—but, even there, neither Waugh's nor Barnes's adulteresses seem particularly cunning.

In twentieth-century Britain it is acceptable to present fictions about the craft and malice of adulterous women as fiction. This was not the case in fourteenth-century Egypt or in the medieval Islamic world more generally. In his preface to *al-Bukhalā'*, 'The Misers', the tenth-century essayist, al-Jāhiẓ, hit the nail on the head, when he argued that anecdotes were only truly interesting when one knew the characters and can trace them back to their sources by establishing a kind of contact with their protagonists.'[36] Similarly al-Tanūkhī in his *Nishwar al-Muḥādarat*, or 'Desultory Conversations', took care to present his stories as events that had happened to actual people. Moreover, he often gave his sources for the stories he was relating.[37] Al-Ḥarīrī, the author of the *Maqamāt*, was embarrassed to be writing fiction, but he defended the activity by referring to the citation of legend in the Qur'an, by insisting that his stories had a moral purpose, by seeking to link his writing with the acceptable and established genre of animal fables.[38] Even so, he was indeed attacked for peddling pointless lies about non-existent people. Even more tellingly, some of his supporters defended him on the grounds that he had not made Abū Zayd up and that he had actually encountered this man preaching in a mosque.[39] The *Thousand and One Nights* was prefaced by an exordium which insists on the importance of learning from the examples of stories about past peoples.[40] Within the *Nights*, Sheherezade does not make up stories; she transmits them. Many of the stories within the *Nights* were adventures which had been fathered onto historical personages, such as Hārūn al-Rashīd, the Barmecides, al-Ma'mūn, Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī, Isḥāq al-Mawṣilī and Abū Nuwās.

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[36] Abū 'Uthmān b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ, *The Book of Misers*, tr. R.B. Serjeant (Reading, 1997), 6–7.

[37] On al-Tanūkhī, see D.S. Margoliouth, *The Table-Talk of a Mesopotamian Judge*, (London, 1922); J. Ashtiany, "Al-Tanūkhī's *al-Faraj ba'd al-shidda* as a literary source" in *Arabicus Felix: Luminosus Britannicus: essays in Honour of A.F.L. Beeston on his Eightieth Birthday*, ed. A. Jones, (Reading 1991), 108–28.

[38] R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, (London, 1907), 330.

[39] Killito, *Séances*, 248–59; on the general issue of the dubious status of fiction in medieval Arab culture, see now S.A. Bonnebacker, "Nihil obstat in storytelling" in edd. R.G. Hovanissian and G.Sabagh, *The Thousand and One Nights in Arabic Literature and Society*, (Cambridge, 1997), 56–77.

[40] *The Arabian Nights*, translated by Husain Haddawy, (New York, 1990), 2.

So what a reading of ʿAlī al-Baghdādī's book presents us with is an example of the embarrassments of fiction. Stories had to be useful. From reading ʿAlī's stories, one could take example and be put on guard against cunning women. Stories were not supposed to be made up; rather they were transmitted by their compiler. ʿAlī was careful to provide a *silisila*, however perfunctory for most of his stories. What was more, he transplanted those stories into the Mamluk environment which his readers would be familiar with and he larded them with (in the words of W.S. Gilbert) 'Merely corroborative detail, intended to give artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative'.

As has been argued above, it was common enough to provide a story with a bogus historical context by fathering it on to some historical personage. However, ʿAlī goes farther than that. The context he sets his stories in is more than a matter of mere names and dates. The stories are garnished with details about shopping, perfumes, hashish eating, drinking clubs and the food consumed at them, the costumes of soldiers, shepherds and wives of merchants, apartment blocks, and so on. That is precisely the value of his stories. In their striving for artistic verisimilitude, they do provide accurate information about the texture of life in mid-fourteenth-century Egypt. In providing a more or less contemporary setting for the stories he chose for his anthology, ʿAlī was unusual. However he was not unique. The 'Hunchback' cycle of stories in the *Nights* was set in what is unmistakably Mamluk Cairo and is cluttered with all sorts of details about topography, food, costume and commercial transactions. Thus the Egyptian style of the hunchback's collar, the tailor's detailed shopping-list, the Christian broker's itinerary through Cairo from the Jawli caranvansaray through the Bāb al-Naṣr, the precise figures of the donkey-men's brokerage fees, the reference to the Jirjis Market off Bayn al-Qaṣrayn, the amputation performed at the Bāb Zuwayla and so on.[41] The Hunchback cycle is exceptional among the core stories of the earliest *Nights* manuscript in striving for a contemporary and detailed verisimilitude. Other core stories tend to be set in the never-never land of, say, Hārūn al-Rashīd's Baghdad. However, other stories added to the core collection of

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[41] *The Arabian Nights*, (trans. Haddawy), 206–295; c.f. Irwin, *The Arabian Nights. A Companion*, 137–9.

Nights stories in the late Mamluk or the Ottoman period—such as 'The Governor of Qūs and the Sharper', or 'The Merchant of Cotton and his Frankish Wife' seem to be anchored in the realities of their time. The *Zahr al-Anīq* may be mostly worthless as a source on the sex-lives of the great, but it still seems to me to have value as a source on the material history of Mamluk Egypt and Syria.

It is also possible that 'Alī al-Baghdādī's book is of value as a source on social attitudes in the mid-fourteenth century Sultanate. 'Alī's treatment of the military, who feature in quite a number of stories, shows neither respect or affection. The Turkish élite are portrayed as greedy and stupid—and some of them cannot speak Arabic properly. However, in one of the stories, the thirteenth, a Bedouin from Upper Egypt is portrayed as even more stupid than the Mamluk officer and his agent who outwit the Bedouin. (The denseness of the Bedouin was also an occasional feature in the *Thousand and One Nights*, for example in the story in which Crafty Delilah persuades a Bedouin to take her place on the condemned person's cross by assuring him that this is the place where one gets served fritters.)[42] And, finally on attitudes, although 'Alī worked with a Jew in listing and valuing the property of the intestate during the Black Death, the eighteenth of his stories is distinctly anti-Semitic. It is also interesting to note that the amīrs and mamluks in 'Alī al-Baghdādī's scabrous tales do not dwell in the Citadel in splendid isolation. They live cheek by jowl with the civilians in all parts of Cairo.

While on the subject of attitudes, I should note that Lopez-Baralt has taken a different approach to 'Alī's book in drawing attention to the pervasive and at rather hypocritical mixture of piety and immorality in the text. 'Alī pretends to expect the approval of God for what he has written. At the end of the nineteenth adventure, in which a hashish-eater has been fooled into thinking that he is a shepherd, 'Alī al-Baghdādī prays to God to keep us from falling prey to such incidents. At the end of the seventeenth adventure (which is about how a carpenter manages to have sex with a man's wife in full view of that man), 'Alī hopes that God will curse such libertines. At the end of the first adventure 'Alī begs God to forgive the story's adulterous lovers. But of course in all medieval Arab texts,

[42] Burton, *Arabian Nights*, iv, 144–171, esp. 164–6.

even in such satanic documents as the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, pious invocations served as a kind of literary small-change. Lopez-Baralt rightly characterises 'Alī's perfunctory moralising as 'cosmetic' and as the sign of a bad conscience (*malestar de concienca*).[43]

Despite what has been argued above, it is difficult to be certain that all of the stories in 'Alī al-Baghdādī are pre-Mamluk or made-up. I have found no parallels for a few of them. Some have the ring of truth—or, if not that, then at least the dull clank of possibility. The twenty-first adventure which concerns the *wālī* of Cairo, Sayf al-Dīn Qudaydār's failure to seduce the daughter of a great amīr and how she tricked him by offering a bribe to let her Christian lover escape is straightforward enough to be possibly true. So too is the story of the melancholy deputy-governor of Bahnasā who was fleeced by a Cairene prostitute.

The craft-and-malice-of-women is a major genre in medieval literature and warnings against the power and adulterous proclivities of women provides a common theme for many story collections, such as the *Syntipas* cycle. Yet 'Alī's book is not a straightforwardly misogynist collection of stories. Rather the sense of the book is that admiration is due to the women, while contempt is directed at the stupidity, boorishness, lust and greed of men, whether soldiers, shopkeepers, Bedouin and hashish eaters. 'Alī's own preface urges the reader to take delight in (rather than warning from) the cunning and quick-wittedness of women.[44] Also, while it is the case that the women, in 'Alī's book, usually devoted their quick wits to talking their way in or out of various men's beds, in the first story and more especially in the eleventh story what is being celebrated is the women's literary skills and their ability to produce impromptu poetry appropriate to any occasion.

'Alī, in fact, seems to have had a more positive attitude to women in Mamluk Egypt than some modern historians have shown. If the Mamluk Sultanate did indeed begin its slide towards decline and fall sometime around the mid-fourteenth century, surely it would make more sense to focus on the crisis brought about by the Black Death rather than to point the finger at the Sultan's wives and singing girls.[45] We have evidence that royal women spent a lot on extrava-

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[43] Lopez-Barrault, *Un Kama Sutra español*, 259–60.
[44] al-Baghdādī, *Kītāb al-Zahr* f. 1a–1b; Khawam, *Les Fleurs*, 29–30.
[45] D. Ayalon, "The Plague and its Effects upon the Mamluk Army", *JRAS*, (1946),

gant dresses, but not much evidence that they exercised any real political power (still less that any power they did exercise must have been deleterious). In any case, a such an exageratedly prolonged decline, which starts in the mid-fourteenth century and carries on through the 1360s, 70, 80s 90s, and goes on all the way through the fifteenth century and only reaches its culmination in the opening decades of the sixteenth century, is not a historiographically useful concept with which to work.

67–73; A. Udovitch, "England to Egypt, 1350–1500: Long-term Trends and Long-distance Trade", in M.A. Cook (ed.) *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, (London, 1970), 115–28; Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East*; Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 134–8.

XV

The Privatization of "Justice" under the Circassian Mamluks

The failure of military and palace entitulature to match the actual functions of those who bore the titles was a fairly pervasive aspect of Mamluk rule. Thus, for example, the *dawādār*, or Bearer of the Sultan's Inkwell, exercised much wider powers than his ceremonial title might suggest. Under the Bahri Mamluk sultans, the *dawādār* was not only in charge of the chancery, but also controlled, or at least exercised responsibilities for, foreign affairs, the *barīd* (state postal service), and espionage.[1] Similarly, the chief duty of the *mihmāndār* (the officer in charge of receiving guests) seems to have been to liaise with powerful Arab tribal shaykhs, particularly the Banū Faḍl, the paramount Arab tribe in the Syrian desert.[2]

Ḥājib may be translated literally as "doorkeeper" or "chamberlain" and *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb* as "chief doorkeeper." However, it is questionable whether the *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb*, a senior officer in the Mamluk regime, actually spent much of his time in opening and closing the sultan's door, or in screening petitioners and others who sought audience with the sultan. In "Studies in the Structure of the Mamluk Army," David Ayalon described the function of the *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb* as follows: "The main function of the *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb* was the administration of justice among the mamluks of the amirs according to the laws of *Yāsa*. His authority was independent, but during the time that the office of *nā'ib al-salṭana* was in existence he was sometimes obliged to consult with the holder of that office. It was also his duty to present guests and envoys to the sultan and he was in charge of organizing military parades." Ayalon additionally noted that originally there were three *ḥājib*s, but Barqūq increased their number to five.[3] Ayalon's description of the *ḥājib*s as enforcers of the Mongol law code of the *Yāsa* echoed the views previously put forward by A. N. Poliak.[4] However, Ayalon later came to reconsider the matter

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[1]Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (Beckenham, Kent, 1986), 39.

[2]Ibid., 115 and n.

[3]David Ayalon, "Studies in the Structure of the Mamluk Army III," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16 (1954): 60.

[4]A. N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and the Lebanon, 1250–1900* (London, 1939), 14 f., 65; idem, "Le Caractère colonial de l'État Mamelouk dans ses Rapports avec la

and, in a series of carefully researched and cogently argued articles, he demonstrated that the *ḥājib*s did not administer justice according to the Mongol *Yāsa*.[5] Since Ayalon discussed the matter, others have gone further and doubted the very existence of Chingiz Khan's *Yāsa* in the sense of a written code of Mongol law and custom.[6] Even so, according to Ibn 'Arabshāh, there was some kind of written code called the *Yāsa*, which was produced and read out every time a new Great Khan was chosen.[7]

Be that as it may, if the *ḥājib*s were not administering justice according to the Mongol *Yāsa*, what were they doing? The role of *ḥājib*s in the Bahri Mamluk period has been discussed by Jørgen Nielsen in a monograph devoted to *maẓālim*, or "secular royal jurisdiction."[8] As he notes, *maẓālim* literally means 'wrongful exactions.'[9] However, the word was commonly used to refer to the discretionary jurisdiction of rulers and governors to settle grievances and respond to petitions without directly basing themselves on the shari'ah. *Maẓālim* overlapped with *siyāsah* and "the maẓālim under the Mamlūks in practice became involved in a particular form of siyāsa."[10] This last "is the prerogative of the head of state—whether caliph or sultan—to set aside the Sharī'a, to supplement it, and to influence its interpretation and application."[11] Nielsen has noted the claims advanced by al-Subkī, al-Maqrīzī, and al-Qalqashandī that *ḥājib*s took over the administration of *maẓālim* ("secular" or "political justice") and in doing so usurped much of the authority of the qadis.[12] The three authors cited seem to be implying that the *ḥājib*s exercised some kind of judicial authority not just over members of the Turkish mamluk military caste, but also over the population at large. Nielsen, basing himself on detailed chronicle references to the exercise of *maẓālim* or *siyāsah* justice by the

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Horde d'Or," *Revue des études islamiques* 9 (1935): 235–36; idem, "The Influence of Chingiz-Khan's Yāsa upon the General Organisation of the Mamluk State," *BSOAS* 10 (1940–42): 862ff.

[5]Ayalon, "The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khan: A Re-examination," *Studia Islamica* 33 (1977): 97–140; 34 (1971): 151–80; 36 (1972): 113–58; 38 (1973): 107–56.

[6]See, for example, David O. Morgan, "'The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khan' and Mongol Law in the Ilkhanate," *BSOAS* 49 (1986): 163–76; idem, *Medieval Persia, 1040–1797* (London, 1988), 55.

[7]Irwin, "What the Partridge Told the Eagle: A Neglected Arabic Source on Chinggis Khan and the Early History of the Mongols," in *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden, 1999), 5–11.

[8]Jørgen S. Nielsen, *Secular Justice in an Islamic State: Maẓālim Under the Baḥrī Mamlūks, 662/1264–789/1387* (Istanbul, 1985); cf. idem, "*Maẓālim* and *Dār al-'Adl* Under the Early Mamluks," *Muslim World* 66 (1976): 114–32.

[9]Nielsen, "*Maẓālim*," 114–15.

[10]Nielsen, *Secular Justice*, 32.

[11]Nielsen, "*Maẓālim*," 123.

[12]Nielsen, *Secular Justice*, 83–85, 107–9.

sultan and his officials in the Bahri period, is inclined to the view that the accusations made by al-Subkī, al-Maqrīzī, and al-Qalqashandī were unfounded. Those accusations are of a piece with more general complaints by civilian and religious writers about the various ways in which the Mamluk elite allegedly infringed the provisions of the shari'ah. Nielsen's overall conclusion was that "the maẓālim was primarily occupied with considering the oppression, arrogance, mistakes or plain inefficiency of officialdom."[13]

There is no reason to doubt the correctness of Nielsen's conclusion insofar as the administration of *maẓālim* justice in the Bahri period is concerned. However, of the authors cited on the *ḥājib* and his usurpation of judicial authority, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī wrote his curious treatise on the importance of good intentions in all walks of life, the *Kitāb Mu'īd al-Ni'am wa-Mubīd al-Niqam,* quite late in the Bahri period (in the early 760s) and al-Qalqashandī and al-Maqrīzī wrote in the Circassian period. Al-Subkī was already uneasy that the Turks had made the *ḥājib* a judge and that he tended to follow the authority of *siyāsah,* rather than shari'ah.[14] In chronicles written in the Circassian period, we find reports of incidents that tend to support the generalized accusations made in al-Subkī's *Mu'īd al-Ni'am* and in al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*. Indeed, not only did the *ḥājib*s usurp judicial powers that were formerly exercised by the qadis, but other military officers also did the same.

However, the military usurpation of judicial powers only seems to have become flagrant and pervasive in the opening decades of the fifteenth century. Al-Qalqashandī finished compiling his chancery encyclopedia, the *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá,* in 814/1412. According to al-Qalqashandī, under the Mamluk sultans, *ḥājib*s had acquired a jurisdiction over cases not suitable for the courts, such as ones relating to the *dīwān*s (financial offices).[15] In a separate section of the encylopedia al-Qalqashandī dealt with *maẓālim* and the various forms that *maẓālim* petitions took depending on what officer or official they were presented to.[16] It would appear then that by al-Qalqashandī's time *maẓālim* cases were not the exclusive prerogative of the sultan and the *ḥājib.*

Al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*, a topographical work that ranged more widely than merely topographical issues, was written ca. 827/1424. In it, in the section devoted to the office of *ḥājib,* he complained that, whereas in the early Mamluk period the

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[13]Ibid., 133.

[14]Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn 'Alī al-Subkī, *Kitab Mu'īd al-Ni'am wa-Mubīd al-Niqam* (Cairo, 1948), 40.

[15]Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá fī Kitābat al-Inshā'* (Cairo, 1913–18), 3:277; 5:450.

[16]Ibid., 6: 204–10.

jurisdiction of *ḥājib*s did not extend beyond dealing with military matters, such as disputes between *jundī*s (soldiers) concerning *iqṭā'*s and so forth, in his own time the *ḥājib*s had taken upon themselves to arbitrate on matters that had been previously dealt with by qadis according to the shari'ah. "Nowadays *ḥājib* is the term applied to the various amirs who give judgement over the *nās*." Although "*nās*" here may be translated simply as "people," it is possible that al-Maqrīzī intended the term to refer only to members of the military elite. (However, the case of the Persian merchants cited below suggests that he may after all have been using *nās* in the first and more general sense.) He went on to claim that the *ḥājib*s tended to be swayed in their judgements by bribes that were handed to the *ra's nawbat al-nuqabā'* and "today the *ḥājib* judges over everything great and small regarding the *nās*, whether it be a matter of shari'ah or *siyāsah* jurisdiction." "*Siyāsah*" was a Satanic word in al-Maqrīzī's eyes.[17]

In a subsequent section devoted to *siyāsah* jurisdiction, al-Maqrīzī denounced the corruption and arbitrary proceedings of the *ḥājib*s. They did what they wished and they proliferated to such an extent that in one year there were 86 *ḥājib*s. According to al-Maqrīzī, the rot began with the case of a group of Persian merchants whom the Hanafi chief qadi had put in prison for failing to pay import dues in 753/1352 during the reign of al-Ṣāliḥ ibn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn. The chief *ḥājib*, Sayf al-Dīn Jurjī, exercised his authority, based on *siyāsah*, in order to set those merchants free and exact the dues demanded by the merchants' creditors. "From then on the *ḥājib* did what he wished in judging over the people *(nās)*."[18]

According to Ibn Ḥajar, in 823/1420 (only a few years before the *Khiṭaṭ* was compiled) the sultan al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (who was then very ill and approaching death) had decreed that *ḥājib*s should exercise no jurisdiction in shari'ah matters. However, the sultan's decree remained in force for only a couple of days, as the mamluk amirs campaigned so vigorously against it that the sultan was compelled to rescind his decree and proclaim that they could indeed exercise jurisdiction in shari'ah affairs. Immediately following this royal volte-face, the Hanafi chief qadi and the senior *ḥājib* clashed. Though it is not entirely clear what the clash was about, it seems that the *ḥājib* refused to hand over an accused man to the qadi's jurisdiction and had his messenger flogged. The sultan, when he heard of the matter, was enraged and told the *ḥājib* that if he, the sultan, had been enjoined to conform to the jurisdiction of shari'ah law, he would have done so immediately. He then reissued the decree that only qadis could exercise jurisdiction in shari'ah

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[17]Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār [Khiṭaṭ]* (Cairo, 1959), 3:145.

[18]Ibid., 148f.; c.f. Joseph Escovitz, *The Office of Qâḍî al-Quḍāt in Cairo under the Baḥrī Mamlûks*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, vol.. 100 (Berlin, 1984), 159; Nielsen, "*Maẓālim*," 127.

matters and the *mashā'ilī*s (urban dogsbodies who functioned as lamplighters, removers of night-soil, and police constables, as well as town-criers) went round the city proclaiming this. The *ḥājib*, enraged by this, had one of the *mashā'ilī*s flogged, but when the Hanafi qadi complained, the *ḥājib* excused himself by claiming that he had had the *mashā'ilī* flogged for a different matter altogether. After that things quietened down for a bit.[19]

Ibn Taghrībirdī, in his account of the reign of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (815/1412–824/1421), under the year 819/1416, states that the deputy *dawādār* did not at that time exercise justice among people *(nās)* nor were orderlies *(nuqabā')* stationed at his door. The same applied to the deputy head of guards *(ra's nawbah thānī)*.[20] Ibn Taghrībirdī continues that the first deputy *dawādār* to exercise those prerogatives was Qurqmās al-Sha'bānī, while the first deputy *dawādār* was Aqbīrdī al-Minqār. Qurqmās was appointed deputy *dawādār* in 824/1421 or in 825/1422. (Ibn Taghrībirdī is inconsistent on the chronology of Qurqmās's career).[21] The chronicler also gives inconsistent information about Aqbīrdī's career, but evidently he became deputy head of guards during the sultanate of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, since he died before the sultan did.[22]

A few decades later there was a renewed clash over the respective spheres of influence of the qadi and the *ḥājib,* when the Sultan Jaqmaq clashed with the Maliki qadi in 856/1452. In this case a Muslim had successfully brought a case against a Jewish trader dealing in Circassian mamluks and had had it judged according to shari'ah law. However, the Jew refused to accept shari'ah jurisdiction and threatened to take the case elsewhere, whereupon the qadi had him flogged. Then the Jew appealed to Jaqmaq, who summoned the qadi and rebuked him for encroaching on what properly belonged to *siyāsah* jurisdiction and told him that he had given judgement in error. The qadi was then briefly deposed.[23]

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[19]Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Inbā' al-Ghumr bi-Anbā' al-'Umr*, ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo, 1972), 3:219.

[20]Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Berkeley,1909-36), 6:356; translated by William Popper as *History of Egypt, 1382–1469 A.D. Translated from the Arabic Annals of Abu l-Maḥasin ibn Taghrî Birdî by William Popper*, University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, vols. 13–14, 17–19, 22–24 (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1954–), 3:38.

[21]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 6:356, 7:255f.; Popper, *History*, 3:38; 5:168f.

[22]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 6:347, 458; Popper, *History*, 3:32, 108. The (intrinsically trivial) problem here is that Ibn Taghrībirdī describes Aqbīrdī as having exercised justice among the people with orderlies at his gate before being promoted to the governorship of Alexandria in 818/1415, and this is at least a year before the he says the deputy head of guards began to exercise the new prerogatives.

[23]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr fī Madá al-Ayyām wa-al-Shuhūr*, ed. William Popper (Berkeley, 1930), 1:129f.

Ibn Taghrībirdī reported the above incident in his chronicle *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr*. In his other chronicle, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah* (which is more closely focused on the character and deeds of the Mamluk sultans), he spells out how arbitrary and widespread the administration of "justice" had become by mid-fifteenth century. At the end of his annal for year 861 (1456–57) he observed that the "year ended with the authority of the judges *(ḥukkām)* of shari'ah and *siyāsah* set at naught by the power of the purchased mamluks *(julbān)* of the Sultan Inal. Anyone from the people *(nās)* with a claim against anyone whomsoever went to one of these mamluks to secure his claim and no sooner had he informed the mamluk of what he wished than he secured what he wished from his opponent in the case. For at the gates of the most important of these mamluks a sort of head of guards *(ra's nawbah)* and military police *(nuqabā')* were stationed, while some had a *dawādār*. The mamluk would then send for the other man in the case and, after threatening him with a beating and other punishment, he would command the man to satisfy the plaintiff's claim, whether that claim was true or false. If he did not pay he would immediately be beaten and thrashed. Everyone learned about this and went to them to have their affairs settled and people *(nās)* deserted the judges *(ḥukkām)*. So the purchased mamluks became very powerful and the judges' authority reached a nadir."[24]

Ibn Taghrībirdī returned to the theme in his account of the events of 863/1458–59. At this time, "the power of the purchased mamluks exceeded all limits, while the authority of the judges of Egypt was absolutely null. Anyone who had a just claim, or the semblance of such a claim brought his charge against his opponent only before the purchased mamluks, and immediately he would secure what he claimed from his opponent, justly or otherwise. So everyone, especially merchants and sellers of any kind of wares, feared the mamluks and most men gave up their businesses, fearing the loss of their capital . . . "[25]

Despite the efforts of various scholars to assign a precise meaning and function to the *naqīb* (pl. *nuqabā'*), the term does not seem to have been used very precisely. According to Ayalon, the *naqīb al-jaysh* was a sort of chief of military police with responsibility for arrests and escorting the condemned to execution. He also had responsibilities for mustering and parading troops. The *nuqabā' al-ḥalqah* were his deputies in Cairo. There was also a *naqīb al-mamālīk* who may have had similar duties, but only with respect to mamluks and not the rest of the army.[26] Popper also gave the *naqīb al-jaysh* a role as military policeman and adds that he

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[24]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 7:494; Popper, *History*, part 6:72.

[25]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 7:516f.; Popper, *History*, 6:84–85.

[26]Ayalon, "Studies in the Structure," 64–65.

had many opportunities for collecting bribes.[27] However, from the passage in the *Nujūm al-Zāhirah* just cited above, it would appear that the term *naqīb* was used in a general sense to refer to the junior officers employed to guard the ad hoc courts of the mamluks and to enforce their decisions. Al-Maqrīzī also notes that the *naqīb*s, like the *ḥājib*s, were especially associated with *maẓālim* sessions, which they attended as court officers.[28]

The administration of *maẓālim* was also associated with the platforms *(dikak,* s. *dikkah)* from which the mamluk officials gave their verdicts. The *dikak* were sited at the gates of the mamluk amirs' houses. In 910/1505 the sultan al-Ashraf Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī, moved by piety, banned the great officials among the amirs from stationing *nuqabā'* at their gates and he banned all trials except those that were conducted according to the shari'ah.[29] Something similar happened in 919/1513–14, when Qānṣawh, under the impetus of a sudden surge of piety brought on by the outbreak of plague in Egypt, again issued a decree abolishing the "platforms" and their attendant officers *(nuqabā')* and messengers *(rusul).* It is clear from the context of this decree that he was attempting to abolish the practice of mamluk officers selling justice to all and sundry. However, like al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, Qānṣawh faced pressures from his officers to have their profitable jurisdiction restored to them. They argued that since they were no longer able to give justice, the people *(nās)* have no way of securing their rights *(ḥuqūq).* Whereupon Qānṣawh partially backed down and allowed the platforms to be re-established, but he decreed that the *nuqabā'* and messengers should henceforth be debarred from taking too large a percentage from plaintiffs in order to advance their cases.[30]

The usurpation by amirs and mamluks of some of the judicial functions of the qadis may explain why some mamluks studied shari'ah law. It is a notable feature of the Circassian period that a number of mamluk officers were well versed in Hanafi jurisprudence. The amir Ṭāṭār (later the sultan al-Ẓāhir Ṭāṭār) is probably the most famous example. According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, during the short reign of al-Muẓaffar Aḥmad (824/1421), Ṭāṭār presided and delivered judgements in the stables of the Cairo Citadel. He "decided cases between the people and settled the affairs most judiciously, for he was a man of outstanding ability, alert and intelligent, and had a good knowledge of jurisprudence and other subjects; he loved to study

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[27]Popper, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans, 1382-1468 A.D.: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghrî Birdî's Chronicles of Egypt,* University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, vols. 15–16 (Berkeley, 1955-57), 1:94.

[28]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 2:245.

[29]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr* (Istanbul, 1931), 4:76; translated by Gaston Wiet as *Journal d'un bourgeois du Caire* (Paris, 1955), 1:73.

[30]Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i'*, 4:312, 320; Wiet, *Journal,* 1:283, 292f.

especially the teachings of the Ḥanafite masters, for he held them in high honour."[31] There are, however, other examples. Tamurbughā, who also rose to be sultan (872/1467–8), had an excellent knowledge of Hanafi jurisprudence.[32] The amir Sayf al-Dīn Sūdūn al-Maghribī (d. 843/1439–40), who rose to be a deputy *ḥājib* before being politically disgraced, is a particularly interesting example. According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, Sūdūn was obsessive in his study of jurisprudence and invariably supported the case of the weak against the strong. This meant that if he heard a case between a trooper and a peasant, he would always give judgement in favor of the peasant, even if the trooper was actually in the right.[33]

It is quite likely that there were other amirs and mamluks who tried to deliver justice according to the precepts of the shari'ah, or at least according to a sense of equity, but evidently other mamluks were selling verdicts for money and receiving petitions in order to exercise patronage and develop local clienteles. The "justice" and "protection" that these officers offered will not have differed very much from that offered by Don Corleone in Mario Puzio's novel *The Godfather*. We are dealing here with a mostly subterranean history. At first the *ḥājib*s, acting as delegates of the sultan, exercised a kind of administrative jurisdiction over matters relating to the army and the *dīwān*s. Then they took to hearing cases presented by merchants and other civilians and thereby encroached on the jurisdiction of the qadis, at which point judicial and executive powers became utterly confounded. Then other quite junior officers, such as the deputy *dawādār*, arrogated the same jurisdiction to themselves. Then even purchased mamluks took to receiving petitions from all and sundry and using their muscles to enforce their ad hoc jurisdiction. However, the fragmentary and somewhat speculative nature of the evidence of abuses in *maẓālim* jurisdiction described above is obvious. Pious chroniclers complained repeatedly about the way that the provisions of the shari'ah were being breached, but they did not actually dwell upon the matter, nor did they systematically record the way in which *maẓālim* justice was delegated and diffused to such an extent that justice shaded into racketeering and any mamluk with a sword could pose as an officer of the law. It was hardly a matter for celebration.

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[31]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 6:484; Popper, *History*, 3:126.

[32]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 7:843f.; Popper, *History*, 7:140.

[33]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 7:267f.; Popper, *History*, 5:176. On learned mamluks more generally, see Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, 1992), 128–60; idem, "'Silver Threads Among the Coal': A Well-Educated Mamluk of the Ninth/Fifteenth Century," *Studia Islamica* 73 (1991): 109–25.

XVI

Mamluk Literature

When the Mamluks took power first in Egypt and then in Syria, there must have been many who viewed their ascendancy with dread. During the 650s/1250s the Ṣāliḥī Bahri mamluks had acquired a reputation as rapacious thugs. The Mamluk Sultan Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77), who was feared by his subjects rather than loved, had no literary culture and was, indeed, illiterate. Nevertheless, he did listen to readings of history. Specifically, he listened to the chronicle of his own exploits, the *Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* read to him by its author, the historian and senior chancery official Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir. The sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn showed little or no interest in literature and his Arabic was notably poor. However, as we shall see, even in that first generation of the Mamluk regime there were some amirs who took a serious interest in literature. More literate and literary mamluks emerged from the second and third generation of the military elite, for the Mamluk regime in Egypt and Syria relied on an unusually literate military elite. This was because the training of a young mamluk in the Cairo Citadel did not just include exercises with sword, lance, and bow. Twice every week, Arab scholars from the city came in to instruct the young mamluks how to speak and read Arabic, as well as the tenets of Islam. There was a *faqīh* assigned to each barrack *(ṭabaqah)* whose job it was to teach the young mamluks the Quran, the Arabic script, and elements of the shari'ah.[1] Evidence survives from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that the sultans' young mamluks in the Citadel were put to work copying manuscripts in the royal library.[2]

The Ayyubid library in the Citadel, the *khizānat al-kutub,* had been destroyed by a fire in 1292, and it is not clear what steps were taken to replace the lost volumes. Subsequently, the wealthy amir and friend of Ibn Khaldūn, Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ʻAlī al-Ustādār, provided his Jamālī madrasah with a large collection of books purchased from the royal citadel. The sultans al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh and al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq were fanatical book collectors, but it is not clear whether the books they collected ended up in the royal library of the Citadel. The chief concentration of institutional libraries was in the mosques and madrasahs of the

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[1]Aḥmad ibn ʻAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāʻiẓ wa-al-lʻtibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Bulaq, 1853–54), 2:213–14.

[2]Barbara Flemming, "Literary Activities in Mamluk Halls and Barracks," in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet,* ed. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), 249–60.

Bayn al-Qaṣrayn.[3] To mark the restoration of the mosque of al-Ḥākim after the earthquake of 702/1302–3, Baybars II presented the mosque with a library of 500 volumes on the religious sciences, literature, and history.[4] There were also private libraries amassed by some of the great amirs. The Cairo palace of Badr al-Dīn Baysarī al-Shamsī (d. 1298) had a grand collection of Arab books, as well as a certain "Turkish book" that so fascinated the historian Ibn al-Dawādārī.[5] The wealthy vizier Amir Badr al-Dīn Baydarā similarly amassed a great library. According to Ibn al-Ṣuqā'ī, Baydarā liked *adab* and singing.[6]

Al-Maqrīzī once composed some verses in which he claimed that people who loitered about in markets were up to no good. The only exceptions he allowed were loitering in the weapons market or the book market. The main book market used to be in Fustat, east of the Mosque of 'Amr. This market declined steeply in the fourteenth century, but al-Maqrīzī could still remember buying books there as a boy. In 700/1301, however, a new book market, the Sūq al-Kutubīyīn, had been founded, close to the goldsmiths' market. This market was part of the *waqf* of the Manṣūrī Bīmāristān. Another, smaller cluster of bookstalls was to be found close to the Azhar Mosque (and close also to the candle market, where the prostitutes used to hang out). In the fifteenth century, the Sūq al-Warrāqīn, or market of copyists, was close to Barsbāy's madrasah. Bookshops were, of course, also copying shops and some of them also doubled as circulating libraries.

Barracks, libraries, and bookshops apart, prisons also sometimes served as a somewhat unexpected learning environment for members of the Mamluk elite. Baybars al-Jashinkīr studied Arabic in prison before becoming sultan. The sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad already had Arabic when he was imprisoned, and he used it to study al-Bayhaqī's eleventh-century writings on hadith. The theologian and jurist Ibn Taymīyah wrote copiously in prison. Shihāb al-Dīn al-'Umarī got much of his (rather inaccurate) information about Europe from a fellow-prisoner who was Genoese. Ibn 'Arabshāh was presumably in prison when he wrote his unfinished eulogistic chronicle of the achievements of Jaqmaq.

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[3]On libraries of the Mamluk period, see Carl Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1981), index, s.v. "libraries." On medieval Muslim libraries more generally, see Youssef Eche, *Les Bibliothèqes arabes publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Egypte au moyen age* (Damascus, 1967); Mohammed Makki Sibai, *Mosque Libraries: an Historical Study* (London, 1987).

[4]Donald Little, "Religion under the Mamluks," *Muslim World* 73 (1983): 170.

[5]Ulrich Haarmann, "Turkish Legends in the Popular Historiography of Medieval Egypt," in *Proceedings of the VIth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, ed. Frithiof Rundgren (Leiden, 1975), 99, 102.

[6]Faḍl Allāh ibn Abī al-Fakhr al-Suqā'ī, *Tālī Kitāb Wafayāt al-A'yān*, ed. Jacqueline Sublet (Damascus, 1974), 75.

Some amirs seem to have identified strongly with Arabic culture. Sanjar al-Dawādār wrote poetry. Baybars al-Manṣūrī wrote history. Ṭaybughā al-Ashrafī wrote a treatise on archery. The brutal amir Uzdamur al-Kāshif had memorized al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqamāt*, as well as much Arabic poetry. Quite a few amirs and mamluks interested themselves in Hanafi or Shafi'i jurisprudence or in collecting and transmitting hadiths. However, although it is not uncommon to come across references to sultans, amirs, and mamluks who spoke and wrote in Arabic, there seems to be more evidence of this level of culture in the fifteenth century than in earlier periods.[7]

The literary culture of the Mamluk period was Turkish as well as Arabic, though the production of literary works in Turkish mostly seems to have been a late development that reached its peak in the Circassian period. Turkish works composed within the frontiers of the Mamluk Sultanate were written in Kipchak, Oghuz, or a mixture of the two. It is one of the curious features of the Circassian period that, on the evidence of what has survived, more works were then translated from Arabic or Persian into Kipchak or one of the other Turkish dialects than in the preceding Kipchak Turkish Mamluk period. It seems probable that, despite the increased numbers of Circassians imported into Egypt and Syria in the later Mamluk period, some form of Turkish remained the military lingua franca. It is difficult to consider the Turkish literature of Mamluk Egypt in isolation from that of the Golden Horde, Khwarizm, Anatolia, and Azerbaijan. The legacy of Khwarizmian Kipchak literary culture and its continuation in the lands of the Golden Horde was at first particularly important. Later on, translations into Oghuz Turkish, the dialect of the Anatolian and, more specifically, of the Ottoman Turks became more common. However, even towards the end of the Mamluk period, in the reign of Qānṣūh al-Ghūrī, a mamluk called Asanbāy min Sūdūn copied a Hanbali religious treatise by Abū al-Layth in the Kipchak dialect for the royal library. Much of what was translated into Turkish was instructional in nature, dealing with jurisprudence, hippology, or *furūsīyah* and hence of no interest to the student of literature in the narrow sense.

It seems that the earliest text on Turkish grammar to circulate in the Arab lands was produced by an Andalusian immigrant. Athīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū

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[7]On the Arabic culture of the mamluks, see Ulrich Haarmann, "Arabic in Speech, Turkish in Lineage: Mamluks and Their Sons in the Intellectual Life of Fourteenth-Century Egypt and Syria," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33 (1988): 81–114; Jonathan Berkey, "'Silver Threads Among the Coal': A Well-Educated Mamluk of the Ninth/Fifteenth Century," *Studia Islamica* 73 (1991): 109–25; idem, "Mamluks as Muslims: The Military Elite and the Construction of Islam in Medieval Egypt," in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, ed. Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge, 1998), 163–75; Robert Irwin, "The Privatization of 'Justice' Under the Circassian Mamluks," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 (2002): 69–70.

Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (654–745/1256–1344) was born in Granada, but like so many of his literary contemporaries, he ended up in Cairo, where he enjoyed the patronage of Sayf al-Dīn Arghūn, the *nā'ib al-salṭanah* in Egypt. Although Abū Ḥayyān was primarily a grammarian and linguist, he also enjoyed a considerable reputation as an elegant, stylish poet, who produced verses on a wide range of themes. In particular he made use of poetry to expound grammar. An expert linguist, he wrote in Turkish and Persian. His *Al-Idrāk li-Lisān al-Atrāk* is an exposition of the Turkish language as it was spoken in Cairo. Bärkä Faqīh's translation of part of *Khusraw and Shirin* from Persian into Kipchak Turkish in 1386 was the first work of high literature to be produced in Turkish in the Mamluk lands. A few years later Sayf-ı Sarāyī arrived in Egypt. Sayf-ı Sarāyī, as his name suggests, came to Egypt from the capital of the Golden Horde and was the most prominent writer of Turkish verse to reside in the Mamluk lands. He translated Sa'dī's *Gulistan* into Kipchak Turkish, and added an appendix of poems, most of which were his own.[8] More generally, Turkish scholars and littérateurs were likely to receive a favorable reception from the Mamluk elite. Sayf al-Dīn Sarghitmish al-Nāṣirī, one of the most powerful amirs in the decades that followed the death of the sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and a fanatical partisan for the Hanafi *madhhab*, founded a Hanafi madrasah that became a magnet for *fuqahā'* from all over the Turkish-speaking world.[9] Ibn 'Arabshāh's and al-'Aynī's knowledge of Turkish almost certainly helped bring them to the favor of the Mamluks.[10]

The sultan al-Ẓāhir Tātār (r. 824/1421), besides studying Hanafi jurisprudence and the shari'ah in Turkish, was fond of listening to poetry, especially Turkish poetry, which he memorized, and he was said to understand the principles of its composition. He also collected books in Turkish. According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, he was the second Mamluk sultan, after al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, to have had a taste for the sciences *('ulūm)*,

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[8]On Turkish literature in the Mamluk lands, see András Bodrogligeti, "A Collection of Poems from the 14th Century," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16 (1963): 245–311; idem, *A Fourteenth Century Turkic Translation of Sa'di's Gulistān* (Bloomington, Ind., 1970); idem, "A Grammar of Mamluke-Kipchak," in *Studia Turcica*, ed. L. Ligeti (Budapest, 1971), 89–102; idem "Notes on the Turkish Literature at the Mamluke Court," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 14 (1962): 273–82; János Eckmann, "The Mamluk-Kipchak Literature," *Central Asiatic Journal* 7 (1962): 304–19; Barbara Flemming, "Zum Stand der Mamluk-Türkischen Forschung," in *XIX. Deutscher Orientalistentag 1975 in Freiburg im Breisgau: Vorträge*, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Supplement 3, 2 (Wiesbaden, 1977), 1156–64. On Athīr al-Dīn Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī, see Th. Emil Homerin, "Reflections on Poetry in the Mamluk Age," *MSR* 1 (1997): 80–85.

[9]Leonora Fernandes, "Mamluk Politics and Education: The Evidence from Two Fourteenth Century Waqfiyya," *Annales Islamologiques* 23 (1987): 87–98; Petry, *Civilian Elite*, 338–39.

[10]Annemarie Schimmel, "Some Glimpses of the Religious Life During the Later Mamluk Period," *Islamic Studies* 7 (1965): 356–57.

arts, and literature.[11] Ibn Taghrībirdī's obituary of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh states that that sultan was fond of poetry, though what kind is not stated.[12] Those military men who did interest themselves in literary culture were likely to write in both Arabic and Turkish—and, in a few cases, in Persian as well. Sayf al-Dīn Taghrībirmish al-Jalālī (d. 1448), an expert in *fiqh*, composed in both Arabic and Turkish.[13]

The brutal Amir Yashbak min Mahdī (d. 1480), the terror of the Arabs of Upper Egypt and a notorious sadist, was also a key figure in the literary culture of the late fifteenth century. Besides bringing peace of a desolate sort to Upper Egypt, he presided over the defeat of Shāh Sūwār in Anatolia and opened hostilities against Uzun Ḥasan in Iran. One can describe him as the power behind Qāytbāy's throne, though in fact he was such a prominent statesman and soldier that he could better be described as the power in front of the throne. Judged as a whole, Yashbak's personality and career are strongly reminiscent of his near-contemporary, John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester (ca. 1427–70), for Tiptoft was notorious as England's chief torturer and impaler and famed, also, as a pious and cultured humanist.[14] Yashbak wrote a genealogy of the Prophet, as well as soulful religious poems in Turkish. He was also a passionate collector of books and an important cultural patron. He was especially fond of Persian scholars. He was the patron of the Persians Ya'qūb Shāh and Pīr Ḥajjī. Yashbak commissioned the production of beautiful books, for example the copy of al-Būṣīrī's poem of praise of the Prophet, *Al-Kawākib al-Durrīyah*, which is preserved in the Chester Beatty Library.[15] This and other acts of religious patronage may raise doubts about Ibn Taghrībirdī's claim that Yashbak hated religion. Much of what we know about Yashbak comes from his client, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd ibn Khalīl Ibn Ajā al-Ḥalabī (d. 881/1476). Ibn Ajā, a former student of Ibn Ḥajar's, also wrote poetry in Turkish. Ibn Ajā served Yashbak as military qadi and envoy and he produced a fascinating chronicle of Yashbak's campaigning against the Dhu al-Qadrid prince Shāh Sūwār. He also translated al-Wāqidī's *Futūḥ al-Shām* into Turkish for Yashbak.[16] Al-Sakhāwī, who praised Yashbak's generosity to *fuqarā'*, hajjis, and

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[11]Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Berkeley, 1909–36), 6:517; Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'* (Cairo, 1934), 4:8.

[12]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, 6:428.

[13]Berkey, "Silver Threads."

[14]Rosamond J. Mitchell, *John Tiptoft, 1427–70* (London, 1938).

[15]Chester Beatty MS 4169; c.f. Esin Atıl, *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, 1981), 47 and note.

[16]On Yashbak's political and literary career, see Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd ibn Khalīl Ibn Ajā, *Tārīkh al-Amīr Yashbak al-Ẓāhirī*, ed. 'Abd al-Qādir Aḥmad al-Ṭulaymāt (Cairo, 1974); Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (Weimar and Leiden, 1898–1902, 1943–49), S2:78; Haarmann, "Turkish Legends," 98; Bernadette Martel-Thoumian, "Les dernières batailles

plague victims, wrote the chronicle *Al-Tibr al-Masbūk fī Dhayl al-Sulūk* at his request, and al-Sakhāwī added that Yashbak later carried the book about with him and showed it to other people. However, having celebrated Yashbak's discrimination and enthusiasm, al-Sakhāwī gloomily and typically added that all that "is a thing of the past. Nothing now remains but stupidity, boorishness, and an interest in worldly trifles."[17] Yashbak's master, the sultan al-Ashraf Qāytbāy (r. 872–901/1468–96), shared his henchman's literary interests. He composed Turkish *ghazal*s, as well as Arabic religious poetry and *muwashshaḥ*s, and he composed Sufi *awrād* and *adhkār* in Arabic. Muḥammad ibn Qāytbāy followed in his father's literary footsteps. As we shall see, the penultimate Mamluk sultan, al-Ashraf Qānṣūh al-Ghūrī, was at least as cultured as his former owner, Qāytbāy.[18]

The literacy in Arabic of many amirs and mamluks may explain the number of manuscripts produced in this period devoted to *furūsīyah*, hunting, hippology, and perhaps also chess (a game that was considered as a training in strategic thinking). Treatises on *furūsīyah* that aimed at the mamluk market were mostly of a practical nature and thus quite unlike the devotional treatises in what was nominally the same genre produced by such pious Arabs as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah. Even so, literary and antiquarian elements might creep in and, for example, al-Aqsarā'ī's *Nihāyat al-Su'āl wa-al-Umniyah fī Ta'līm A'māl al-Furūsīyah* recycled parts of Aelian's *Tactica*, a second-century A.D. Greek treatise on strategy that must have been of negligible use for fourteenth-century Mamluk cavalry.[19]

Evidently, the bookish tastes of the Mamluk elite had some part in shaping the literature of medieval Egypt and Syria. However, the role of the *awlād al-nās* was

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du grand emir Yasbak min Mahdi," in *War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean, 7th–15th Centuries*, ed. Yaacov Lev (Leiden, 1997), 301–42, esp. 314–15; Flemming, "Literary Activities," 252, 255; idem, "Šerīf, Sultan Ġavrī und die 'Perser,'" *Der Islam* 45 (1969): 87–89; Toufic Fahd, *La Divination arabe* (Paris, 1987) 202 n.

[17]Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-I'lān bi-al-Tawbīkh li-Man Dhamma al-Tārīkh*, translated in Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1968), 329.

[18]On al-Ghūrī's literary culture, see Mohammad Awad, "Sultan al-Ghawri: His Place in Literature and Learning (Three Books Written under His Patronage)," in *Actes du XXe Congrès international des orientalistes* (Louvain, 1940), 321–22; Flemming, "Šerīf," 81–93; idem, "Aus den Nachtgesprächen Sultan Gauris," in *Folia Rara: Wolfgang Voigt LXV. Diem Natalem Celebranti ab Amicis et Catalogorum Codicum Orientalium Conscribendorum Collegis Dedicata* (Wiesbaden, 1976), 22–28. On Turkish literature of the Mamluk period more generally, see János Eckmann, "Die Mamluk-kiptchakische Literatur," in *Philologiae Turcicae Fundamenta*, ed. Jean Deny et. al. (Wiesbaden, 1959–), 2:296–304; Omeljan Pritsak, "Das Kiptschakische," in ibid., 1:74–87; Ananiasz Zajaczkowski, *Vocabulaire Arabe-Kiptchak de l'époque de l'État Mamelouk: Bulġat al-Muštaq fī Luġat at-Turk wa-l-Qifžaq* (Warsaw, 1958); Bodrogligeti, "Collection of Turkish Poems"; Flemming, "Zum Stand der Mamluk-Türkischen Forschung."

[19]Geoffrey Tantum, "Muslim Warfare: A Study of a Medieval Muslim Treatise on the Art of War," in *Islamic Arms and Armour*, ed. Robert Elgood (London, 1979), 194–96.

perhaps even more crucial. The *awlād al-nās,* sons of mamluks, many of whom had married into Arab elite households, acted as cultural intermediaries between the Mamluk elite and their Turkish subjects, and many of them also wrote books. The subject has been the subject of an excellent study by Ulrich Haarmann.[20] The ranks of the *awlād al-nās* included such writers as Ibn al-Dawādārī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Jankalī al-Bābā, al-Ṣafadī, Ibn al-Turkumānī, Ibn Manglī, Ibn Sūdūn, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and Ibn Iyās. In most cases, the identification of the *awlād al-nās* with Arabic culture was total. However, the historian Ibn al-Dawādārī took an interest in Turkish legends and folklore and Ibn Taghrībirdī was famous for his expertise in Turkish matters, though some of his critics doubted that expertise.

A remarkably large part of the literature of the Mamluk age was produced by Arab officials working in the employment of the state, either in the *inshā'* (chancery) or in one of the *dīwāns*. The income from state employment may have cushioned their writing activities. On the other hand, in many cases the bureaucrats seem to have been producing literature in the expectation of advancing their careers. Ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir, ʻIzz al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād, Shāfīʻ ibn ʻAlī, Ibn al-Mukarram, and Ibn Abī Ḥajalah were among the chancery men who wrote chronicles celebrating the achievements of ruling sultans.[21] In the case of Ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir, his chronicles, especially the one devoted to the deeds of Qalāwūn, seem to have largely served as a framing device for Ibn ʻAbd al-Ẓāhir's own drafts of diplomatic pieces and occasional displays of fine prose.[22] (The elaborate official drafts produced earlier in the Ayyubid period by such figures as al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil and ʻImād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī furnished the model for this sort of thing, and Ibn Nubātah, who worked in the Syrian and Egyptian chanceries, was to produce a collection of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil's letters, as an act of literary piety.) That chancery prose was esteemed and enjoyed as a form of belles-lettres is indicated by the inclusion of a chapter on the subject in al-Ghuzūlī's *Maṭāliʻ al-Budūr* (on which see below).

Besides histories, officials in the *inshā'* also produced extensive manuals on the running of the chancery and the *adab,* or culture, that the scribes who worked in it might be expected to have. Saladin's officials ʻImād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil served as prose models for writers in the service of the Mamluk *inshā'*.

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[20]Haarmann, "Arabic in Speech."

[21]P. M. Holt, "Literary Offerings: A Genre of Courtly Literature," in *Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society,* 3–16; Otfried Weintritt, *Formen spätmittelalterlicher islamischer Geschichtsdarstellung: Untersuchungen zu an-Nuwairī al-Iskandarānīs* Kitāb al-Ilmām *und verwandten zeitgenössischen Texten* (Beirut, 1992), 185–200. See also Robert Irwin, "Mamluk History and Historians," in the forthcoming volume of the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature* edited by Roger Allan and Donald Richards and devoted to late medieval literature.

[22]P. M. Holt, "Three Biographies of al-Ẓāhir Baybars," in *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds,* ed. D. O. Morgan (London, 1982), 19–29.

The chancery official Muḥammad ibn Manẓūr's chancery treatise, *Tadhkirat al-Labīb wa-Nuzhat al-Adīb*, has not survived (though it was one of Ibn al-Furāt's and al-Qalqashandī's sources). However, Muḥammad ibn Manẓūr, also known as Ibn Mukarram (630–711/1233–1311), was also well known as a philologist and lexicographer, whose chief claim to fame was his compilation of one of the great dictionaries of the medieval period, the *Lisān al-'Arab*. The *Lisān* was no mere glossary of words and their meanings. Because of its numerous citations of illustrative fragments of poetry and other material, it was in effect a literary chrestomathy.[23]

Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (667–732/1279–1332) worked in government service as a scribe and financial official. However, he only wrote his encyclopedia, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab*, after leaving government service. Successive volumes dealt with the universe, poetry, female singers and administration, fauna, flora, and history. (The historical section provided disproportionately a large tail to this learned dog.) The *Nihāyah*, like some of its successors, was more of a copious display of knowledge than a seriously useful office manual. Similarly, the *Masālik al-Abṣar fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī (700–49/1301–47), was pre-eminently a work of *adab*, rather than a serious work of reference for the scribe in office. (The same author's *Al-Ta'rīf bi-al-Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf* would have been more useful in the latter respect.) Like so many authors in this period, al-'Umarī was a polygraph, and he wrote a history of his family of distinguished jurists, as well as various other shorter works, including poems.[24] Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Qalqashandī (756–821/1335–1418) compiled the *Ṣubḥ al-A'shá fī Sinā'at al-Inshā'*, which contains an unusually large number of official documents in it, so that the work comes close to constituting an archive of templates for drafts of official documents. Al-Qalqashandī also wrote a *maqāmah* on secretaryship, as well as a treatise on Arab tribes.[25] Almost all the officials briefly discussed wrote on a disconcertingly wide range of matters. It was a feature of the age. Poets doubled as biographers and authors of religious treatises. Pornographers wrote poems in praise of the Prophet and treatises on dream interpretation. The disinclination of writers to tie

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[23]Walther Björkman, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei im islamischen Ägypten* (Hamburg, 1928), 67; John A. Haywood, *Arabic Lexicography: Its History and Its Place in the General History of Lexicography*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1965), 77–82; Claude Cahen, *La Syrie du nord à l'époque des croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), 76–77; Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970), 77.

[24]Etienne Quatremère, "Notices de l'ouvrage entitulé Masâlek-el-absâr," *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du roi* 13 (1838): 151–384.

[25]Björkmann, *Beiträge;* Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "Al-Ḳalḳashandī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 4:509–11.

themselves down to any particular genre makes it more or less impossible to present an orderly picture of Mamluk literature.

After the golden age of the Hamdanids in Northern Syria in the tenth century, there was little in the way of a sustained culture of poetry and belles-lettres in Syria or Egypt until the late twelfth century. There was, however, a literary renaissance in the Ayyubid and early Mamluk period. Like all true renaissances, it had a backward-looking flavor and it harked back to the manners and literary productions of eighth– and ninth-century Abbasid Iraq, so that al-Mas'ūdī and al-Jāḥiẓ served as models for Mamluk prose stylists. The poets of Cairo and Damascus studied the old Baghdadi prescriptions on how to court beautiful slave girls, cultivate male friendships, dress elegantly, and perfume themselves. There was then an antiquarian feel to much of Mamluk belles-lettres and poetry, as its authors looked back on the cult of the *nadīm* (cup-companion) and the *ẓarīf* (dandy). Around the mid-thirteenth century, the poets Bahā' al-Dīn Zuhayr and Taqī al-Dīn ibn Daqīq al-'Īd (who wrote poetry but was better known as a qadi and an alchemist) embraced fairly self-conscious roles as *ẓurafā'*. In the following generation, Ibn 'Afīf al-Tilimsānī, the composer of elegant poetry about wine and love, was also known as al-Shābb al-Ẓarīf (the Young Dandy). Al-Ghuzūlī's fifteenth-century belles-lettres compilation included a chapter on the *nadīm,* and another on the repertoire of stories of the *nadīm*, both of which drew largely on Abbasid material. Al-Suyūṭī's later treatise on women, *Al-Mustaẓraf,* dealt mostly with slave girls of the Abbasid period and the passions they aroused, and this too was essentially part of the old culture of the *ẓarīf.* The code of the *ẓarīf* was not confined to the written page and, for example, the fifteenth-century Amir Jānibak al-Ashrafī dressed and behaved like a *ẓarīf.*[26] The personnel and manners of the *ẓurafā'* overlapped somewhat with those of the gay community. Al-Tīfāshī remarked how it had become fashionable in literary circles to affect homosexual mannerisms. Besides the cages of singing birds, the chessboard, and bottles of wine, the typical gay man's apartment contained books of poetry, love romances, and magical treatises.[27]

Apart from the example of old Baghdad, the court culture of al-Andalus and the Maghrib also provided models for the would-be courtier and writer. Sharaf al-Dīn Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Tīfāshī (580–651/1184–1253) was an immigrant from Tunisia whose *Mut'at al-Asmā'* was a treatise dedicated to the pleasures of music, dance, shadow theatre, and wine drinking. His account of the etiquette of court concerts, in which music, song, and wine came together, drew

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[26]On the persistence (or was it a revival?) of the culture of the *ẓarīf,* see Mhammaed Ferid Ghazi, "Un group sociale: 'Les Raffinés' (*ẓurafā'*)," *Studia Islamica* 1 (1959): 59.

[27]Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Tīfāshī, *Nuzhat al-Albāb fīmā la Yūjadu fī Kitāb,* ch. 5. René Khawam's translation of this work, as *Les Délices des coeurs* (Paris, 1981), should be treated with caution.

sharp contrasts between eastern and western ways of holding these entertainments. Al-Tīfāshī was also author of a literary encyclopedia, *Faṣl al-Khitāb fī Madārik al-Ḥawāss al-Khams*, and a well-known treatise on precious stones, *Azhār al-Afkār fī Jawāhir al-Aḥjār*, as well as various works of erotica.[28] He was one of several well-known North African immigrants who found a patron in the amir Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Yaghmūr (d. 663/1265). Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī Ibn Sa'īd al-Maghribī (d. 673/1274), the poet, anthologist, and geographer, was another. Indeed Ibn Yaghmūr's salon, where poets used to compete with one another at capping lines, was known as *kāhf al-maghāribah* (or Cave of the Maghribis).[29] Ibn Yaghmūr was a friend of the father of the historian al-Yūnīnī. (Other writers and scholars from North Africa who found patronage in Egypt or Syria later on in the Mamluk period included such distinguished figures as Ibn Manẓūr, Ibn Abī Ḥajalah, and Ibn Khaldūn.) The strong interest of Egyptian and Syrian poets in the *muwashshaḥ* form is yet another indication of the literary influence of Andalusia.

Since the poetry of the Mamluk period is still only partially explored, it is difficult to offer generalizations about its development or confidently to single out the important poets of the period.[30] At first at least, little panegyric poetry was written in praise of Mamluk sultans (presumably because those sultans were not really interested in poetry). Instead poetic praise *(madīḥ)* tended to be addressed to the Prophet and to ulama and holy men. Bahā' al-Dīn Zuhayr (581–656/1186–1258) wrote panegyrics in the hope of securing patronage, but with only modest and intermittent success, and in the end he died in poverty. His less grandiose lighter pieces, hedonistic, satirical, and urbane, are more pleasing to a modern sensibility. Above all his verses commemorated fleeting passions and regrets for wasted youth.[31]

The hedonistic celebration of love and wine gardens was continued by Bahā' al-Dīn's successors. Only a few representative figures will be singled out here. Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (657–ca. 750/1278–ca. 1349) was born and died in Iraq. He also spent time in Egypt and Syria. He frequented the court of the Ayyubids of

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[28]For al-Tīfāshī on concerts and related matters, see M. B. al-Ṭanjī, "Al-Ṭarā'iq wa-al-Alḥān al-Mūsīqīyah fī Ifrīqīyā wa-al-Andalus," *Al-Abḥāth* 21 (1968): 93–116. On al-Tīfāshī's oeuvre more generally see Iḥsān 'Abbās's preface to al-Tīfāshī (as abridged by Ibn Manẓūr), *Surūr al-Nafs bi-Madārik al-Ḥawās al-Khams* (Beirut, 1980).

[29]Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un Centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale, Qūṣ* (Cairo, 1976), 242 n.

[30]On that poetry, see in particular Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām, *Al-Adab fī al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī*, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1971); Homerin, "Reflections on Poetry," 63–85.

[31]Edward Henry Palmer, *Poetical Works of Behá-ed-Dīn Zoheir, of Egypt* (Cambridge, 1877); D. M. Dunlop, *Arab Civlization to A. D. 1500* (London, 1971), 68–69; R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260* (Albany, 1977), 250–51.

Ḥamāh, and al-Ṣafadī introduced him to the sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in Egypt. Ṣafī al-Dīn wrote playful and licentious verse (addressed to both sexes). Unlike Bahā' al-Dīn, he was a master of word play and of the elaborate *badī'* style, and more generally he seems to have delighted in displaying his versatility in all the forms of poetry in favor at the time. He wrote *qaṣīdah*s and *muwashshaḥ*s. He also produced a treatise on popular Arabic poetry of his time, entitled *Al-'Āṭil al-Ḥālī*. However, by far and away his most interesting work is his *Qaṣīdah al-Sāsānīyah*, in which he made use of a wide range of rather esoteric underworld jargon in order to describe the modus operandi of the Banū Sāsān (that is to say the beggars, charlatans, and low life entertainers).[32] (On the Mamluk preservation of the old literary cult of rogues, beggars, and freeloaders see below).

Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī also produced a panegyric *qaṣīdah* in honor of the Prophet, *Al-Badī'īyah al-Nabawīyah*. This was modeled on an earlier *qaṣīdah*, the *Burdah* of Sharaf al-Dīn al-Būṣīrī (608–ca. 694/1212–ca. 1294). Al-Būṣīrī was a minor figure in the Mamluk administration, who wrote *khamrīyah*, as well as poetry on a variety of other themes, including attacks on Copts and corrupt officials. The *Burdah*, though famous and still widely esteemed today for its wonder-working therapeutic properties, is of little literary interest.[33] Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī's version, however, was a much more elaborate and artful affair, which made use of a different rhetorical figure in each of its lines. The latter's way of emulating and outstripping the *Burdah* was to be widely imitated by poets who came after him, including Ibn Ḥijjah (whose version was so obscure that its author felt impelled to produce a commentary on it) and 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah (a learned Sufi who died in 922/1516).[34]

Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Nubātah (686–768/1287–1366) was, like Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī, a poet who found patronage at the puppet court of the Ayyubids of Ḥamāh. His edition of al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil's letters has already been mentioned. The historian prince al-Mu'ayyad Abū al-Fidā' was one of his patrons and the panegyrics Ibn Nubātah wrote for him were collected and entitled *Al-Mu'ayyadāt*. After the deposition and death of Abū al-Fidā''s son and successor al-Afḍal, Ibn Nubātah wrote a lament for the end of the Ayyubid dynasty. Though he later briefly found employment in the service of the Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan, it is hard not to feel that Ibn Nubātah's growing interest in Sufism and his production of *zuhdīyāt*

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[32]See, above all, Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld: The Banū Sāsān in Arabic Society and Literature* (Leiden, 1976), 1:132–49; also R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (1907; reprint, Cambridge, 1966) 449–50.

[33]Nicholson, *Literary History*, 326–7; Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "Al-Būṣīrī," *EI*^{2} *Supplement*, 158–59.

[34]See in this issue Th. Emil Homerin, "Living Love: The Mystical Writings of 'Ā'ishah al-Bā'ūnīyah (d. 922/1516)."

(poetry of asceticism) indirectly at least reflected his straitened circumstances. He died in poverty.[35]

The impulse to demonstrate literary diversity is exemplified by the oeuvre of Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Abī Ḥajalah (725–76/1325–1375). Born in Tlemcen, Ibn Abī Ḥajalah was a poet, anthologist, and jack-of-all-literary-trades. He produced a much-admired anthology on profane love, the *Dīwān al-Ṣabābah* (Divan of ardent love), which covered roughly the same ground as the eleventh-century Andalusian Ibn Ḥazm's famous work on the *adab* of love, *Ṭawq al-Ḥamāmah,* and which mostly drew on older materials. However, his literary production was quite diverse and also included *qaṣīdah*s in praise of the Prophet, a *qaṣīdah* on Peter of Cyprus's attack on Alexandria, a compilation designed to console those who mourn over the death of a child entitled *Sulwat al-Ḥazīn fī Mawt al-Banīn,* a chess *maqāmah* entitled *Unmudhaj al-Qitāl fī Li'b al-Shatranj,* several treatises on the plague, and a chronicle of the reign of the sultan al-Nāṣir Ḥasan, as well as an account of the revolt of the *julbān* (newly imported mamluks) against that sultan. The *Sukkardān al-Sulṭān* (Sugar-bowl of the sultan), dedicated to al-Nāṣir Ḥasan, is one of his most curious works, as it harps on the importance of the number seven to the history of Egypt.[36]

Abū Bakr Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī (767–837/1366–1434) was another who spread himself widely in his literary productions. He started out as a button-maker, but later became a minor chancery official in Syria and, like so many of his colleagues, he produced his chancery treatise (entitled *Qahwat al-inshā'*, or Intoxication of the chancery). His major work, however, was his anthology of poetry and prose, the *Thamarāt al-Awrāq* (Fruits of the leaves). This wonderfully miscellaneous compilation included an account of a journey that the author made from Cairo to Damascus and another trip through Anatolia, the history of Hūlāgū in Baghdad, as well as all sorts of curious anecdotes about Umayyad, Abbasid, and Mamluk personalities. Another of his anthologies, the *Khizānat al-Adab* (The Ornate treasury), assembled the best-known poetry of his time. He wrote a treatise on *badī'*, which besides setting out the principles of this elaborately rhetorical form of poetry was also an anthology of contemporary *badī'* poetry. He wrote

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[35]Umar Mūsá Bāshā, *Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī: Amīr Shu'arā' al-Mashriq* (Cairo, 1963). See in this issue Thomas Bauer, "Communication and Emotion: The Case of Ibn Nubātah's *Kindertotenlieder,*" and Everett Rowson, "An Alexandrian Age in Fourteenth-Century Damascus: Twin Commentaries on Two Celebrated Arabic Epistles."

[36]Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Abī Ḥajalah, *Kitāb Sukkardān al-Sulṭān* (Beirut, n.d.); Lois Anita Giffen, *Theory of Profane Love Among the Arabs* (New York, 1971), 38–41; Umberto Rizzitano, "Il diwan as-sababa dello scrittore magrebino Ibn Abī Ḥajalah," *Rivista degli studi orientali* 28 (1953): 35–70; Michael Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977), 326–27; Weintritt, *Formen,* 192–200.

badī' poetry himself. He also collected jokes, and his decidedly miscellaneous writings include a *risālah* on the burning of Cairo by Barqūq in 791/1389, as well as poetry in praise of chess and horses.[37] Ibn Ḥijjah's friend, al-Nawājī, was unkind enough to write a study of his plagiarisms.

Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan Shams al-Dīn al-Nawājī (788–859/1386–1455) studied under al-Damīrī (on whom see below), taught hadith at a couple of madrasahs and had Sufi links, but he is best known for his anthology devoted to wine, *Ḥalbat al-Kumayt* (The Racecourse of the bay). *Kumayt* refers both to a dark bay horse and to a reddish brown wine, cups of which, in al-Nawājī's metaphor, circulated round the convivial table like race horses. Besides celebrating the joys of wine, al-Nawājī's anthology also devoted a lot of space to the ambient pleasures, such as gardens, furniture, flowers, candles, and lamps that went best with an amiable drinking session. Al-Nawājī's *Kitāb al-Ṣabūḥ* was devoted to the more specialized pleasure of drinking in the morning. Both works followed the conventions of an extensive earlier literature of *khamrīyah* (works devoted to wine), and it is unclear whether al-Nawājī's work reflected a genuine enthusiasm for alcohol or whether it was just another example of the literary antiquarianism that was so pervasive in the Mamluk period. The same question applies to his anthology devoted to beautiful boys, *Marāti' al-Ghazlān* (The Prairie of gazelles), which also included some of his own poems on the subject. Al-Nawājī also compiled the *'Uqūd al-La'āl*, strings of pearls, a *muwashshaḥ* anthology, that drew heavily on Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk and al-Ṣafadī.[38]

Much of Mamluk poetry consists either of light-hearted verses d'occasion or of experiments with riddles, chronograms, and similarly artful and taxing devices. These sorts of productions have not survived well compared to the work of older poets—to, say, the more directly hedonistic poetry of an Abū Nuwās or to the warrior's rhetoric of an Abū Firās. It is hard to point to much that was distinctively original. Nevertheless, despite the general conservatism of Mamluk poetry (and the *badi'*, or "original" poetry, was at least as conservative as anything else) there were some developments, including a growing readiness to experiment with folk genres, including the *muwashshaḥ*, the *zajal*, and the *mawwāl*. Andalusian influence was a factor here. Panegyrics were generally to the Prophet and to the ulama rather than to the Mamluk elite. Panegyrics to members of the Mamluk elite, while not unknown, were not so very common. However, Mamluk taste may lie

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[37]Clément Huart, *A History of Arabic Literature* (London, 1903), 324–25. See also Geert Jan van Gelder, "Poetry for Easy Listening: *Insijām* and Related Concepts in Ibn Ḥijjah's *Khizānat al-Adab*" in this issue.

[38]Geert Jan van Gelder, "A Muslim Encomium on Wine: *The Racecourse of the Bay (Ḥalbat al-Kumayt)* by al-Nawāǧī (d. 859/1455) as a Post-Classical Arabic Work," *Arabica* 42 (1995): 222–34.

behind the common choice of a Turkish boy rather than an Arab girl as the object of affection in the *ghazal*, or love poem.

Though the Mamluk era was an age of compilations and anthologies, it was hardly more so than the centuries that preceded it. It seems to have been a point of pride to write upon any and every topic. Short treatises were written on all manner of subjects; al-Ṣafadī wrote on tears, al-Maqrīzī wrote about bees, and al-Suyūṭī wrote on the legality of wearing the furs of squirrels that had been strangled, on jokes about Saladin's governor Qarāqūsh, and much else besides. However, the most popular topics for longer compilations of prose and poetry continued to be love and wine-drinking, and the most pious figures had no hesitation in writing about profane love and partying. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, the Islamic rigorist and Sufi (on whom see below) compiled a treatise on love. So did 'Alā' al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Mughulṭāy ibn Qilīj al-Ḥanafī (ca. 690–762/ca. 1291–1361), who was a Hanafi professor and specialist in hadith, *nasab* (genealogy), and biography. His *Al-Wāḍiḥ al-Mubīn fī Dhikr Man Ustushhida min Muḥibbīn* (The Clear and eloquent in speaking of those lovers who became martyrs), as its title suggests, argued for the reliability of a hadith to the effect that those who die of love are martyrs on the path of God.[39] Al-Tīfāshī's and al-Nawājī's compilations which dealt with wine-drinking and its attendant pleasures have already been mentioned.

Much of that kind of material was also brought together by 'Alā' al-Dīn ibn 'Alī al-Ghuzūlī (d. 815/1412), a citizen of Damascus, in his *Maṭāli' al-Budūr fī Manāzil al-Surūr* (Risings of full moons regarding the pleasures of households). The *Maṭāli'* is a literary anthology on the pleasures of life. These pleasures including sex, candles, speaking birds, slave girls, chess, animals, cooling breezes, wine, and visits to Birkat al-Raṭlī (one of Cairo's pleasure lakes). One chapter, "Fī al-Ṣāḥib wa-al-Nadīm," dealt with what was expected of a friend in the way of elegant behavior and conversation. Such a friend was a latter-day *ẓarīf*, whose uniform included the *qalansuwah* (a pointed hat), *mandīl* (handkerchief), expensive green silken belt, and so on. The next chapter consists of a collection of tales suitable to be told by *nudamā'* in the evenings. The stories date from Abbasid times or even earlier.[40]

A number of important story-collections were put together in this period, of which the best known (after *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah*, that is) was *Al-Mustaṭraf fī Kull Fann Mustaẓraf*, compiled by the Egyptian Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ibshīhī (790–ca. 850/1388–ca. 1446). This was a vast anthology of prose and classical and folk poetry. The prose material included stories of the

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[39] *GAL*, 2:48; ibid., S2:47–48; Sallām, *Al-Adab*, 1:127; Giffen, *Theory of Profane Love*, 33–34, 80.

[40] 'Alā' al-Dīn ibn 'Alī al-Ghuzūlī, *Maṭāli' al-Budūr fī Manāzil al-Surūr*, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1882–83); *GAL*, 2:55; *GAL*, S2:55; Sallām, *Al-Adab*, 2:32–34.

Prophet and of Sufi saints, proverbs, animal fables, and entertaining stories. Many of the stories were of an improving nature and most of it fairly unsophisticated. Stories about simple saints and poor artisans carried a message that the reader should be patient with his lot and content with what God had decreed. However, some tales seem to have been included simply for the comic or erotic pleasure they afforded.[41]

By contrast with al-Ibshīhī's well-known collection, the *Fakihāt al-Khulafā' wa-Mafakihāt al-Ẓurafā'* of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Arabshāh (791–854/1392–1450) has had little attention paid to it in recent centuries. The *Fakihāt*, in which animals tell entertaining and improving tales, was modeled on the Persian *Marzubān-nāmah* of al-Warāwīnī, and, like its prototype, it aimed at an exalted audience, for it was a work in the mirror-for-princes genre. It considerably expanded on its Persian original and included quite a lot of material concerning recent Mongol and Timurid history. Ibn 'Arabshāh modeled his style as well his content upon Persian exemplars and wrote in a torturous and metaphor-laden rhymed prose. Having spent his youth in Samarkand, he had travelled widely since then, and he wrote copiously in both Arabic and Turkish (but it is dispiriting to find how little attention has been paid to his literary oeuvre). Ibn 'Arabshāh's *Al-Ta'līf al-Ṭāhir* was both a royal biography and a mirror-for-princes, with the Sultan Jaqmaq as the model ruler that other princes should follow. Though it seems to have been written in the hope that the exemplary prince would release Ibn 'Arabshāh from prison in Cairo, in fact its author was released only a few days before his death. His better-known *'Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr fī Nawā'ib Tīmūr*, a history of the career of the villainous Tīmūr, or Tamerlane, was written in Arabic, but again in the Persianate manner. Although it was a popular subject of study for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Orientalists, it seems to have had little or no influence on chroniclers of the Mamluk period, perhaps because of its rebarbative, ornate style, so different from the workaday prose of al-Maqrīzī or Ibn Taghrībirdī. Even so, it should be noted that Ibn Taghrībirdī was a fan of Ibn 'Arabshāh and got an *ijāzah* to teach his writings.[42]

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[41]Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ibshīhī, *Al-Mustaṭraf fī Kull Fann Mustaẓraf*, trans. Gustave Rat, 2 vols. (Paris and Toulon, 1899–1902); idem, *Les Poètes amoureux*, trans. René Khawam (Paris, 1999); Octave Houdas, "Al-Mostatraf," *Journal asiatique*, 9th ser., 15 (1900): 388–90; Timo Paajanen, *Scribal Treatment of the Literary and Vernacular Proverbs of al-Mustaṭraf in 15th–17th Century Manuscripts* (Helsinki, 1995).

[42]Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn 'Arabshāh, *'Ajā'ib al-Maqdūr fī Nawā'ib Tīmūr*, ed. Aḥmad Fā'iz al-Ḥimṣī (Beirut, 1986); idem, *Fructus Imperatorum et Iocatio Ingeniosorum (Fākihat al-Khulafā' wa-Mufākihat al-Ẓurafā')*, ed. G. W. Freytag (Bonn, 1832); idem, *Tamerlane; or Timur the Great Amir*, trans. J. H. Sanders (London, 1936); Antoine Isaac Sylvestre de Sacy, "Liber Arabicus," *Journal des Savants* (1835): 602–12, 652–67; J. Pedersen, "Ibn 'Arabshah," *EI*^{2}, 3:711–12; Robert Irwin, "What the Partridge Told the Eagle: A Neglected Source on Chinggis Khan and the Early

Ibn 'Arabshāh has suffered from being treated by modern scholars as merely a historian. But the same is true of Badr al-Dīn al-'Aynī (762–855/1361–1451) and his collection of entertaining stories about various classes of people, the *Majmū' Mushtamil 'alá Ḥikāyāt wa-Ghayrihā,* has received even less attention than the *Fakihāt.*[43] His current reputation is based primarily on his authorship of the chronicle *'Iqd al-Jumān* (Necklace of pearls), which he used to read in Arabic to the sultan Barsbāy, and then explain in Turkish. Of more purely literary interest are his presentation chronicles, *Al-Sayf al-Muhannad fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad* and *Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir,* addressed to the sultans al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh and al-Ẓāhir Tātār respectively, which have a belles-lettres quality, as they are not so much chronicles of the sultans' achievements as panegyrics to the qualities of an ideal ruler. The two texts include disquisitions on cosmology, numerology, genealogy, and pre-Mamluk history, as well as advice of the mirror-for-princes type.[44] Much of al-'Aynī's prestige among his contemporaries rested neither upon his historical nor on his more literary productions, but on his commentary on al-Bukhārī's hadith collection, *'Umdat al-Qārī.* The work of Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī (fl. 670s/1370s) has similarly hitherto only attracted the attention of historians. His *Kitāb al-Ilmām fīmā Jarat bihi al-Aḥkām al-Maqḍīyah fī Waqi'at al-Iskandarīyah,* which has as its pretext an account of Peter of Cyprus's attack on Alexandria in 767/1365, is nevertheless better considered as *adab,* since documentary reporting is crowded out by information about early Arab shipping, stories about Alexander and Aristotle, and other dubiously relevant material.[45]

Although al-Nuwayrī al-Iskandarānī's work may be cited as an instance of what may be called the "literarization of history," it is questionable whether there was a single trend. Sayf al-Dīn Abū Bakr Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. 713/1313) inserted snippets of Turkish and Mongol folklore into his chronicles.[46] Ibn Iyās similarly

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History of the Mongols," in *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy,* ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden, 1999), 5–11.

[43]Hellmut Ritter, "Arabische Handschriften," *Oriens* 2 (1949): 285–87. On al-'Aynī in general, see William Marcais, "Al-'Aynī," *EI*^{2}, 1: 790–91; Petry, *Civilian Elite,* 69–71; Anne F. Broadbridge, "Academic Rivalry and the Patronage System in Fifteenth-Century Egypt: al-'Aynī, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī," *MSR* 3 (1999): 85–107.

[44]Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad Al-'Aynī, *Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Tātār,* ed. Hans Ernst (Cairo, 1962); idem, *Al-Sayf al-Muhannad fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad,* ed. Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo, 1967); Holt, "Literary Offerings," 8–12; Weintritt, *Formen,* 185–92.

[45]Aziz Suriyal Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1938), 349–75; Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography,* 155, 458–59; Weintritt, *Formen.*

[46]Haarmann, *Quellenstudien,* esp. 159–98; idem, "Auflösung und Bewahrung der klassischen Formen arabischer Geschichtsschreibung in der Zeit der Mamluken," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 121 (1971): 46–60; Barbara Langner, *Untersuchungen zur*

enlivened his chronicle of sixteenth-century Egyptian affairs with stories of a folkloric nature. As has already been noted, some chroniclers used their histories as display books for examples of fine chancery prose. The Ba'alabakkī chronicler Qutb al-Dīn al-Yūnīnī (640–726/1242–1326) included a striking amount of poetry in what was formally an annals of Syrian history. In doing so, he was perhaps following the earlier example of Abū Shāmah, the Syrian chronicler of Ayyubid times. (But al-Yūnīnī's readiness to include satirical poetry and poetry which celebrated love and wine-drinking is curious given the chronicler's ascetic tendencies, his devotion to hadith studies and his admiration for the austere Ibn Taymīyah.[47]) Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ṣaṣrā's late fourteenth-century chronicle of Damascus was peppered with fables, proverbs, and moralizing advice.[48] Nevertheless, there were limits to the literarization of history writing, and most chronicles of the Mamluk period were rather uninterpretative, pedestrian chronicles of public affairs whose authors do not seem to have dreamt of emulating such earlier stylish writers of history as al-Mas'ūdī or Miskawayh.

Like the chronicle, the bestiary could also serve as a pretext for the kind of erudition befitting an *adīb*. For example the *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān* (Lives of beasts) by Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Mūsá al-Damīrī (745–808/1344–1405) more closely resembles al-Jāḥiẓ's classic *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* than it does a work of scientific zoology, as al-Damīrī repeatedly digressed into literature and folklore and, for some reason, he chose to add the caliphs to his collection of beasts. However, he was more systematic than al-Jāḥiẓ in that he dealt with his creatures in alphabetical order. Al-Damīrī, who ended up as a *faqīh* in Cairo, had started off as a tailor and his career, like that of al-Nawājī, who also started as a tailor, indicates that the life of an alim was a career open to all the talents.[49] The earlier bestiary *Kitāb Manāfi' al-Ḥayawān* (Usefulness of beasts) of Tāj al-Dīn 'Alī Ibn Durrayhim (712–62/1312–66) is not so very scientific either, but in Ibn Durrayhim's

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historischen Volkskunde Ägyptens nach mamlukischen Quellen (Berlin, 1983), esp. 9–12, 127–30; Weintritt, *Formen;* Bernd Radtke, *Weltgeschichte und Weltbeschreibung im mittelalterlichen Islam* (Stuttgart, 1992); idem "Zur 'Literarisierten Volkschronik' der Mamlukenzeit," *Saeculum: Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte* 41 (1990): 44–52; Li Guo, "Mamluk Historiographic Studies: The State of the Art," *MSR* 1 (1997): 33–37.

[47]Li Guo, *Early Mamluk Syrian Historiography: Al-Yūnīnī's Dhayl Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1998), 1, esp. 87–94.

[48]Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *A Chronicle of Damascus, 1389–1397*, ed. William M. Brinner, 2 vols. (Berkeley, 1963).

[49]József Somogyi, "Ad-Damīrī Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawānja," in *Semitic Studies in Memory of Immanuel Löw*, ed. Alexander Scheiber (Budapest, 1947), 123–30; Manfred Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam* (Leiden/Cologne, 1972), 39–40.

case, discussion of the flora and fauna was skewed by the author's interest in the occult and healing properties of things. Ibn Durrayhim, an immigrant from Mosul who became a professor at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, wrote on a range of occult and related subjects, including code-breaking, dream interpretation, magic mirrors, and physiognomy.[50]

Al-Ṣafadī took an interest in various occult subjects. The Egyptian chroniclers al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Iyās had a strong interest in the legendary history of ancient Egypt with its tales of talismans, treasures, and lost esoteric knowledge. But, in general, this was not a great age for occultism. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah and Ibn al-Ḥājj (on both of whom, see below) denounced the pursuit of such studies. Al-Suyūṭī declared that all of the *'ulūm al-awā'il*, or ancient sciences, were forbidden by God. (These included not just the occult arts, but also logic.) From the thirteenth century onwards, learned magic, which drew on Greek and other non-Arab traditions, was giving way to a pietist Sufi magic that depended on invocations of the names of God, magic squares, manipulations of the mysterious letters at the heads of certain surahs of the Quran and similar procedures. In the early thirteenth century Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Būnī had been the leading proponent of this kind of magic. Thereafter, Shādhilī Sufis disseminated it.[51] It is true that there were still some interesting representatives of the older tradition of Islamic occultism, including Abū al-Qāsim al-'Irāqī, the author of the thirteenth-century magical compendium *'Uyūn al-Ḥaqā'iq* (Wellsprings of truth), and 'Izz al-Dīn Aydamur ibn 'Alī al-Jildakī (d. ca.743/1342), the author of several alchemical treatises. However, though they were impressively learned, this knowledge was marginal to the concerns of the scholarly and literary elite, and such figures were rarely, if ever, accorded the dignity of an entry in a biographical dictionary.[52]

The boundaries between high and low culture were fluid—so much so that it hardly makes sense to speak of boundaries at all. Many writers took pride in demonstrating their command of both *fuṣḥá* and colloquial Arabic. Piety and pornography were not mutually exclusive, and members of the elite in the Mamluk period imitated their Abbasid and Buyid predecessors in taking a curious interest

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[50]Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "The Section on Codes and Their Decipherment in Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā*," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 8 (1963): 17–33; Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften*, 38–39.

[51]Armand Abel, "La Place des sciences occultes dans la decadence," in *Classicisme et déclin culturel dans l'histoire de l'Islam*, ed. Gustav von Grunebaum and Robert Brunschvig (Paris, 1957), 291–311.

[52]On Abū al-Qāsim al-'Irāqī, see Eric Holmyard, "Abū'l-Qāsim al-'Irāqī," *Isis* 8 (1926): 403–26; Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften*, 125, 237, 391, 412. On Jildakī, see Eric Holmyard, "Aidamur al-Jildakī," *Iran* 4 (1937): 47–53; Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften*, 237–42, 413–14; Henri Corbin, *L'Alchimie comme art hiératique* (Paris, 1986).

in the manners, customs, and argot of the Banū Sāsān and other disreputable types. In these respects, the career and writings of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Dāniyāl (ca. 646–709/1248–1310) are instructive. Ibn Dāniyāl, who came from Mosul and who made a living as an oculist, with a shop just inside Cairo's Bāb al-Futūḥ, had distinguished friends. They included the historian Ibn al-Dawādārī, Muḥammad ibn Jankalī al-Bābā (the cultured son of a *wafidī* amir, who was an expert on medicine, hadith, music, and grammar), and, above all, Qalāwūn's son, Khalīl (later to rule as al-Ashrāf Khalīl). Ibn Dāniyāl wrote a long medical poem, several verse panegyrics on Mamluk amirs, *qaṣīdah*s and *muwashshaḥ*s, and a perfectly respectable and respected verse history of the judges of Egypt. But he also produced scripts for three shadow plays that deal with characters who live in or on the edges of the social underworld. *Ṭayf al-Khayāl* (Shadow of the imagination) is about the quest for marriage of a disreputable old soldier. *'Ajīb wa-Gharīb* presents a parade of members of the Banū Sāsān and similar folk, each of whom in turn describes their precarious and disreputable modes of making a living. *Al-Mutayyam wa-al-Ḍā'i' al-Yutayyim* (The Love-stricken one and the lost orphan) is about a homosexual passion, pursued while watching a series of fights between beasts. The plays celebrate most of the vices of the age, and their concluding scenes of repentance are perfunctory. The plays all have a strong pornographic content and make extensive use of low-life slang. (Ibn Dāniyāl also wrote several poems with a similar content, dealing with wine, hashish, and acting.) Even so, Ibn Dāniyāl's audience did not necessarily consist entirely or even primarily of the low-lifers who frequented taverns in the more disreputable parts of Cairo. The plays, though perfunctorily plotted, show considerable sophistication in the use of language and literary allusion and it is clear that Ibn Dāniyāl considered himself to be writing in the tradition of the *maqāmah*s. There are several explicit references in the plays to al-Ḥarīrī's work. Certainly Ibn Dāniyāl was read and cited by al-Ṣafadī, Ibn Ḥajar, al-Suyūṭī, and Ibn Iyās, among others. Al-Ṣafadī was probably his greatest fan.[53]

Ibn Dāniyāl's plays were composed at the request of 'Alī ibn Mawlāhum al-Khayālī, a presenter of shadow plays in Cairo who was possibly the brother of

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[53]Muḥammad Ibn Dāniyāl, *Three Shadow Plays*, ed. Paul Kahle, Derek Hopwood, and Muṣṭafá Badawī (Cambridge, 1992); Haarmann, "Arabic in Speech," 109–110; Shmuel Moreh, *Live Theatre and Dramatic Literature in the Medieval Arab World* (Edinburgh, 1992); Everett Rowson, "Two Homoerotic Narratives from Mamluk Literature: al-Safadi's *Law'at al-shaki* and Ibn Daniyal's *al-Mutayyam*," in *Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature*, ed. J. W. Wright, Jr., and Everett K. Rowson (New York, 1997), 172–84; Li Guo, "Paradise Lost: Ibn Dāniyāl's Response to Baybars's Campaign against Vice in Cairo," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121 (2001): 219–35. See also the articles by Li Guo and Amila Buturović in this issue of *MSR*.

Muḥammad ibn Mawlāhum al-Khayālī, the author of two *maqāmah*s on tradesmen.[54] An Ibn Mawlāhum, as well as Ibn Dāniyāl and the disreputable twelfth-century Spanish poet Ibn Quzmān, is saluted as an esteemed predecessor by 'Alī al-Baghdādī in the preface to his *Kitāb al-Zahr al-Anīq fī Lubūs wa-al-Ta'nīq* (The Book of delicate flowers regarding the kiss and the embrace). 'Alī al-Baghdādī's collection of bawdy tales about wily women was written perhaps in the 1350s. Although the tales are mostly of considerable antiquity (and some have their analogues in *The Thousand and One Nights*), they are presented as having happened to real, named and often identifiable figures in the early Mamluk period.[55]

Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363), a member of the *awlād al-nās* who worked as a government official, wrote in broadly the same tradition as Ibn Dāniyāl. Among much else, al-Ṣafadī wrote *Law'at al-Shākī* (Plaint of the lovelorn), a languorous and elaborate commemoration in rhymed prose and poetry of the narrator's love for a Turkish horse-archer. Al-Ṣafadī also compiled a homoerotic anthology on beautiful boys, a treatise on the *khāl,* or beauty spot, and a *maqāmah* on wine. However, he spread himself even more widely than his admired predecessor, Ibn Dāniyāl. He also produced a series of eminently respectable biographical dictionaries. *Al-Wāfī bi-al-Wafayāt* (The Abundant book on dates of death) is a comprehensive biographical dictionary of Muslim personalities, whereas *A'yān al-'Aṣr* (Leading figures of the age) was restricted to contemporaries. Al-Ṣafadī's fame and usefulness as a biographer has tended to eclipse awareness of his writings in other areas. Apart from composing and compiling works of belles-lettres and erotica, he also wrote about alchemy and *malāḥim* (apocalyptic prophecies).[56]

Although it is not possible to cover in this short survey all those writers who devoted themselves to writing bawdy and entertaining pieces, nevertheless no survey of Mamluk literature would be complete without reference to 'Alī ibn Sūdūn al-Bashbughāwī (ca. 810–68/ca. 1407–64). The son of a Circassian mamluk, Ibn Sūdūn was educated at the Shaykhūnīyah madrasah, but failed to establish himself as a successful alim and after serving as a poorly-paid imam at several mosques, he set about pursuing an alternative career as a satirical poet and buffoon. He acquired notoriety as a hashish addict and after he was expelled from Cairo, he moved to Damascus where he worked as a copyist, but supplemented that income by occasional poems and other literary exercises, including poetry readings and quasi-dramatic performances beneath the Damascus citadel. His collected work

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[54]Moreh, *Live Theatre*, 109.

[55]Robert Irwin, "'Alī al-Baghdādī and the Joy of Mamluk Sex," in *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800)*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Leiden, 2001), 45–57.

[56]Franz Rosenthal, "Al-Ṣafadī," *EI*^{2}, 8:759–60; Donald P. Little, "Al-Ṣafadī as Biographer of his Contemporaries," in *Essays on Islamic Civilization: Presented to Niyazi Berkes*, ed. Donald P. Little (Leiden, 1976), 190–211; Rowson, "Two Homoerotic Narratives," 161–72.

the *Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-Muḍḥik al-'Abūs* (The Diversion of souls and the gloomy person's jester) is in two parts. The first part contains serious panegyrics and love poetry, followed by some humorous material. The second part includes comic *qaṣīdah*s, trumped-up stories, some (silly) *muwashshaḥ*s, other popular verse forms, and brief accounts of wondrous curiosities and strange novelties. According to al-Sakhāwī, Ibn Sūdūn's poetry was popular with the *ẓurafā'*, who fought to get hold of copies of it.[57]

A great deal of literature of a broadly popular nature was produced in the Mamluk period that was devoted to such matters as heterosexual and homosexual love, jokes, the wiles of women, hashish-taking, and the jargon of (legal and illegal) crafts and trades. So far this vast body of literature by Muḥammad al-Bilbaysī, 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Ḥawrānī, Taqī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Badrī, and others has hardly been explored.[58] Whatever the literary merits of such materials, they are certainly of historical interest. Besides literary entertainments by named authors, the Mamluk age was pre-eminently a period in which anonymous epics and story collections were compiled, elaborated, and expanded. The oldest substantially surviving manuscript of *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah* (The Thousand and one nights) dates from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and some of the stories contained in it reflect, in however fanciful a manner, the social and economic realities of life under the Mamluk sultans. The lengthy pseudo-historical epics, however, seem to have been more popular. Of these the most famous was the *Sīrat 'Antar,* which was put together sometime between 1080 and 1400. It was the favorite stock-in-trade of street-corner story-tellers. Despite this epic's notional setting in pre-Islamic Arabia, some of its episodes are based on the Muslims' encounters with the Byzantines and Crusaders. Similarly the *Sīrat Sayf ibn Dhī Yazan,* though set in the Yemen in a fanciful version of the sixth century A.D., shows clear signs of having been composed in Egypt much later. This saga, like so many of its rivals, has an episodic plot, or rather a straggling series of plots. Its chief merit lies in its wild and colorfully inventive deployment of vivid imagery of a magical realist sort—including Snatcher the Jinn who has smoke instead of blood in his veins, the glass bed, and the woman who has been jointly impregnated by a wolf, smoke, and her husband.[59] The *Sīrat al-Ẓāhir,* devoted to the legendary exploits of the

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[57]Moreh, *Live Theatre,* index, s.v. "Ibn Sudun"; Arnoud Vrolijk, *Bringing a Laugh to a Scowling Face: A Study and Critical Edition of "Nuzhat al-Nufūs wa-Muḍḥik al-'Abūs" by 'Alī ibn Sūdūn al-Bašbuġāwī* (Leiden, 1998).

[58]See, however, Bosworth, *Mediaeval Islamic Underworld;* Franz Rosenthal, *The Herb: Hashish versus Medieval Muslim Society* (Leiden, 1971); idem, *Gambling in Islam* (Leiden, 1975); Robert Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (Harmondsworth, 1994).

[59]*The Adventures of 'Antar,* trans. H. T. Norris (Warminster, 1980); *The Adventures of Sayf Ben Dhi Yazan: An Arab Folk Epic,* trans. Lena Jayussi (Bloomington, Ind., 1995); Rudi Paret, *Sīrat*

Mamluk sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars, has a similar lack of narrative sophistication that is only partially compensated for by its madly inventive energy. It is not clear how much of this epic was in existence in the Mamluk period.[60] (The oldest surviving manuscript is sixteenth century and the existing versions are full of Ottoman terminology, as well as mockery of the stupidity and thuggishness of Ottoman Turks.) One of the curious features of the story is the hostility shown to the amir (later sultan) Qalāwūn. Equally curious is the co-option of the Ismaili Assassins to be Baybars' allies in his struggle against Franks, Mongols, sorcerers, and corrupt amirs. The relationship of the story of this epic to real historical events was very slight.[61] Nevertheless, as Franz Rosenthal has observed, it "was through these novels that history filtered deep down into the hearts of the people."[62]

The fantasies purveyed in these popular anonymous *sīrah*s was not so very different from the romances dealing with the origins of Islam, the exploits of 'Alī, and the early Islamic conquests that were attributed to a certain Abū Ḥasan Aḥmad al-Bakrī al-Wā'iẓ. It seems likely, however, that attribution to "al-Bakrī" denoted a literary genre, rather than the real authorship of an actual individual.[63] Whatever the truth of the matter, al-Dhahabī and al-Qalqashandī denounced the lies found in this sort of material. The popular romances suffered the opprobrium of the intelligentsia. Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, writing on the various offices and trades in the Mamluk lands, advised the *nāsikh* (copyist) not to copy "those deceptive books . . . by which God does not offer any useful thing, such as *Sīrat 'Antar* and the books by the *ahl al-mujūn* (the pornographers)."[64] Similarly Ibn al-Ḥājj, in his treatise against unacceptable innovations, inveighed against booksellers who traded in the stories of romantic heroes and most notably in the story of 'Antar.[65] To those who thought like Ibn al-Ḥājj, it was reprehensible to trade in any books that sought merely to amuse. In this period, the literature of vulgar entertainment and

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Saif Ibn Dhī Jazan (Hannover, 1924); Peter Heath, "A Critical Review of Modern Scholarship on *Sīrat 'Antar ibn Shaddād* and the popular *sīra*," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 15 (1984): 19–44; M. C. Lyons, *The Arabian Epic*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1995).

[60]See in this issue Thomas Herzog, "The First Layer of the Sīrat Baybars: Popular Romance and Political Propaganda."

[61]M. C. Lyons, "The Sirat of Baybars", in *Orientalia Hispanica: Sive Studia F. M. Pareja Octogenario dictata* (Leiden, 1974), 1: 490–503; idem, *Arabian Epic.*

[62]Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 186.

[63]Rudi Paret, *Die Legendäre Maghāzi-Literatur* (Tübingen, 1930), 155–58; Rosenthal, *Muslim Historiography*, 169–70.

[64]Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn 'Alī al-Subkī, *Kitāb Mu'īd al-Ni'am wa-Mubīd al-Niqam*, ed. David Myhrman (London, 1908), 51/186.

[65]Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥājj al-'Abdarī, *Kitāb al-Madkhal ilá Tanmiyat al-A'māl bi-Taḥsīn al-Niyāt* (Cairo, 1320/ 1902–3), 3:131.

delight competed with its opposite, a literature of piety and rigorism (and there were even a few authors who tried their hands at writing both types of literature).

Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymīyah (661–728/1263–1328) was the leading figure in the religious campaign against unacceptable innovations in religious and social practices. He issued fatwas and wrote to denounce a wide range of deviations from pure Islam, many of them of folkloric or Sufi origin. His attacks on Sufi deviations into heterodoxy (for example his assault on what he perceived to be the thirteenth-century Andalusian Sufi Ibn 'Arabī's monism) were particularly controversial, and many of the Mamluk elite supported Ibn Taymīyah's pro-Sufi opponents. However, Ibn Taymīyah was not a root-and-branch enemy of Sufism. Like his chief disciple, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, he was a Qādirī Sufi himself. Moreover, in engaging in polemical controversy with the other members of the religious elite and their Mamluk patrons, he offered at least one hostage to fortune, as his extreme version of Hanbalism allowed his enemies to accuse him of the heresy of anthropomorphism regarding the attributes of God. Despite occasional clashes with the Mamluk regime, he was in general a political quietist. "To demand ideal qualifications in a ruler is a sin against God" was one of his observations. He enjoyed a great following not just among the masses (who were ready to riot on his behalf), but also among prominent members of the Mamluk elite, including Kitbughā al-Manṣūrī and Arghūn al-Nāṣirī. Even al-Ṣafadī seems to have been an admirer of Ibn Taymīyah.[66]

Ibn Taymīyah's disciple Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah (691–751/1292–1350) was a prolific writer on the Quran, the shari'ah, and other spiritual matters. In particular, he wrote verse and prose to popularize Hanbali mysticism, and he denounced the occult sciences at length. His *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn* (Garden of the lovers) is a fairly conventional treatise on profane love, only with a more spiritual slant than is common in the genre. His treatise on *furūsīyah*, though it assembles a number of religious precepts on the subject, would have been of no practical use whatsoever to a mamluk horseman.[67] Ibn

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[66]The literature on Ibn Taymīyah is vast. See especially Henri Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines socials et politiques de Takī-d-Din Ahmad b. Taimīya* (Cairo, 1930); Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimīya's Struggle Against Popular Religion: with an Annotated Translation of His Kitāb Iqtiḍā' aṣ-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaquīm* (The Hague, 1976); Donald P. Little, "Did Ibn Taymiyya Have a Screw Loose?" *Studia Islamica* 41 (1975): 93–111; idem, "The Historical and Historiographical Significance of the Detention of Ibn Taymiyya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4 (1973): 311–27; Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany, 1999), 87–111.

[67]Henri Laoust, "Ibn Ḳayyim al-Djawziyya," *EI*^{2}, 3:821–22; Joseph N. Bell, *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam* (Albany, 1979); Giffen, *Theory of Profane Love*, 34–38; John W. Livingston, "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya: A Fourteenth Century Defence against Astrological Divination and Alchemical Transmutation," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 91 (1971): 96–103; Hilary

Qayyim al-Jawzīyah was based in Egypt, but Ibn Taymīyah was also quite widely admired and supported by what has been called the "codex-swapping crowd" in Syria. Most fourteenth-century historians and compilers of biographical dictionaries in Syria, including al-Jazarī, al-Birzālī, al-Yūnīnī, and al-Dhahabī seem to have supported Ibn Taymīyah in his struggles with the authorities, even though by no means all of them were Hanbalis. Ibn Kathīr, who died in 774/1373, was the last important representative of this tradition. Generalizing rather broadly, this group of scholars conceived of history as the handmaiden of hadith studies.[68]

Egyptian chronicles tended to be somewhat more secular and court-centered in their orientation. However, plenty of treatises calling for a stricter observance of Islam were produced in Mamluk Cairo. The best known of such works was the *Madkhal,* a treatise on *bida'* by the Maliki jurist Abū 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-Ḥājj al-'Abdarī (d. 737/1336). The *Madkhal*'s detailed evocation of hedonistic pursuits, albeit couched in the negative (silk carpets not to be displayed, pleasure gardens not to be visited, picnics not go to on and so forth), makes it an invaluable source on social history. Ibn al-Ḥājj denounced the corrupt practices of the Cairenes with all the vigor of an immigrant from the freshly purified Maghrib. However, his main target seems to have been the pleasures of the lower classes; the mamluks on the whole escaped criticism.[69] Idrīs ibn Baydakīn al-Turkumānī also produced a treatise, the *Kitāb al-Luma' fī al-Ḥawādith wa-al-Bida'*, sometime in the fourteenth century, which took a similarly dour view of popular pleasures and local superstitions. Some of al-Turkumānī's targets were conventional, but others were unusual, even eccentric, such as his diatribes against crossbowmen.[70] In the *Madkhal*, Ibn al-Ḥājj had stressed on the importance of *nīyah,* or good intention, and this theme was taken up by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (728–77/1327–69 or 70) in his *Kitāb Mu'īd al-Ni'am wa-Mubīd al-Niqam* (The Restorer of favors and the restrainer of chastisements), which is devoted to good intention in the various

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Kilpatrick, "Some Late Abbasid and Mamluk Books about Women: A Literary Historical Approach," *Arabica* 42 (1995): 56–78.

[68]On Syrian historiography, see Little "The Historical and Historiographical Significance"; Guo, *Early Mamluk Syrian Historiography*, esp. 1:60–96; idem, "Mamluk Historiographic Studies," 37–39.

[69]Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal;* Langner, *Untersuchungen*, Verfasserindex, s.v. "Ibn al-Haǧǧ"; Huda Lutfi, "Manners and Customs of Fourteenth-Century Cairene Women: Female Anarchy versus Male Shar'i Order in Muslim Prescriptive Treatises," in *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven and London, 1991), 99–121. Since, in the *Madkhal*, Ibn al-Ḥājj denounced alchemy as a Sufi *bid'ah*, the attribution of such occult works as the *Shumūs al-Anwār* to him must surely be incorrect.

[70]Idrīs ibn Baydakīn al-Turkumānī, *Kitāb al-Luma' fī al-Ḥawādīth wa-al-Bida'*, ed. Ṣubḥī Labīb (Cairo, 1986); Ṣubḥī Labīb, "The Problem of *Bida'* in the Light of an Arabic Manuscript of the 14th Century," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 7 (1964): 191–96. (But Labīb misidentifies crossbowmen as musketeers.)

ranks, offices, and crafts in Mamluk Egypt. "Be as the corpse in the hands of the washer" was the book's quietist, Sufi burden.

A considerable quantity of edifying uncontroversial Sufi literature was produced in this period, mostly in the form of poems, sermons, or short biographies of Sufi holy men. Ibn Abī Ḥajalah wrote Sufi poetry. 'Abd Allāh ibn Asad al-Yāfi'ī (ca. 700–ca. 768/1299–1367) compiled *Rawḍ al-Riyāḥīn fī Ḥikāyāt al-Ṣāliḥīn*, which contained the biographies of over five hundred Sufis. His collection was later drawn upon by al-Ibshīhī and by the anonymous continuators of the *Arabian Nights*. The Shādhilī Sufi Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh (d. 709/1309) produced collections of spiritual aphorisms and sermons. Both al-Yāfi'ī and Ibn 'Aṭā Allāh were implacable opponents of Ibn Taymīyah.[71] However, the most heated debates throughout the whole Mamluk period concerned the disputed orthodoxy of two Sufis of the pre-Mamluk period, Sharaf a-Dīn 'Umar Ibn al-Fāriḍ (576–632/1181–1235) and Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (560–638/1165–1240). Fierce debates raged about the meaning of their poetic output and about whether it was legitimate to use apparently blasphemous metaphors in order to express holy things. Ibn al-'Arabī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ avoided official condemnation, and Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verses in the *badī'* manner were widely imitated by poets of the Mamluk age.[72] Even so, al-Dhahabī declared that Ibn al-Fāriḍ's writings were "pastry laced with venom." Other distinguished hostile critics included Ibn Abī Ḥajalah, Ibn Khaldūn, and Ibn Ḥajar.

A student of Ibn Ḥajar's, Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Biqā'ī ibn 'Umar (ca. 809–85/ca. 1407–80) was perhaps the most interesting and certainly the most venomous of the critics of the two famous Sufi poets. Al-Biqā'ī can be considered as a writer as man of action, since he participated in Mamluk raids against Cyprus and Rhodes. He was a stylish and embittered author who wrote on a great range of subjects, including hadith, history, biography, famous lovers, and mathematics. Given the Mamluk court's tendency to look kindly on Sufism, his onslaught on monism and other alleged Sufi excesses was doomed, and he died in disgrace in Damascus. Since no one else was likely to, he had written his own eulogy.[73]

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[71]On Sufism in the Mamluk period, see Annemarie Schimmel, "Sufismus and Heiligeverehrung im spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten," in *Festschrift Werner Caskel zum siebzigsten Geburtstag 5. März 1966 gewidmet von Freunden und Schülern*, ed. Erwin Graf (Leiden, 1968), 274–89; Donald P. Little, "Religion under the Mamluks," *The Muslim World* 73 (1983): 165–81; Leonor E. Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: The Khanqah* (Berlin, 1988).

[72]Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and His Shrine* (Columbia, S.C., 1994), 55–75; Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabī*, 49–140, 201–23; Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1982), 160–65.

[73]Giffen, *Theory of Profane Love*, 41–42; Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint*, 62–75; Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabī*, 209–23; Li Guo, "Al-Biqā'ī's Chronicle: A Fifteenth Century Learned Man's Reflection on His Time and World," in Kennedy, *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt*, 121–48.

Although al-Biqā'ī was unusual in the range and quality of the enemies he accumulated, the ninth/fifteenth century was a great age for *odium theologicum* and scholarly rancor. Ibn Ḥajar and al-Maqrīzī hated al-'Aynī, a sentiment that was reciprocated. Al-Maqrīzī and al-Sakhāwī attacked Ibn Taghrībirdī. Al-Suyūṭī and al-Sakhāwī feuded.[74] The intensity of these and other feuds reflected the intensity of the competition for patronage. Writers of ability, or, if not actual ability, at least ambition, flooded into Cairo from Syria, Upper Egypt, Iraq, Anatolia, and North Africa. Many of the leading (and feuding) intellectuals of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century are esteemed today as compilers of useful chronicles and biographical dictionaries. It is certainly true that history writing had a more central role in the literary culture of this period than it had, say, under the Abbasids or the Ayyubids. Even so, few of those who compiled the useful chronologies and obituaries were merely chroniclers of their times and, in some cases, their main interest lay elsewhere. Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (773–852/1372–1449) was the leading intellectual figure of the fifteenth century. He had started out on his literary career as an *adīb* and poet. His *Dīwān* starts with panegyrics of the Prophet, then of rulers and other members of the elite, followed by love poems, followed by verses on miscellaneous themes, and finally *muwashshaḥs*. Horribly industrious, he wrote some 250 books. He is known today chiefly for his biographical dictionary of fifteenth-century people, the *Durar al-Kāminah,* and his much-read chronicle *Inbā' al-Ghumr* (Informing the uninstructed). But in his own time, the reputation of Ibn Ḥajar rested on his expertise in hadith studies and on the many distinguished students he had taught in this field, including al-Sakhāwī, al-Biqā'ī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Qalqashandī, and al-Nawājī.[75]

Ibn Ḥajar, while a political quietist, was anti-Turkish and hostile to those who, like al-'Aynī, identified themselves too closely with the interests of the Mamluk regime. The same was true of Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī (766–845/1364–1442). It is clear that al-Maqrīzī's main interest was history, though he wrote more widely than that, including works on various occult and cosmological matters, Arab tribes, the Sudan, lives of the artists, and, of course, like almost every writer of the Mamluk period, he fancied himself as a poet. His masterpiece, the *Kitāb al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār fī Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (The Book of warning and taking example from places and ruins) is a survey of Cairo and Egypt more generally, in which topography serves as the pretext for literary nostalgia and lamentations about the corruption of the age the author lived in.[76] Al-Maqrīzī's

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[74]On some of these feuds, see Broadbridge, "Academic Rivalry."

[75]Franz Rosenthal, "Ibn Ḥadjar," *EI*^{2}, 3:776–78; Aḥmad Āftāb Raḥmānī, "The Life and Works of Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī," *Islamic Culture* 45 (1971): 203–12.

[76]The literature on al-Maqrīzī is vast, but see, for a general orientation, Franz Rosenthal, "Al-Maḳrīzī," *EI*^{2}, 6:193–94 and, on one aspect of al-Maqrīzī's literary output, Aḥmad al-Ghawaby,

rival Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī (ca. 812–74/ca. 1409 or 1410–69) was similarly primarily a historian, but he also wrote a treatise on the errors that Arabs and Persians make with Turkish names, a collection of proverbs, a treatise on music, and, of course, poetry.[77] Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās (852–ca. 930/1448–ca. 1524), besides writing a well-known chronicle, the *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fī Waqā'i' al-Duhūr,* was a prolific poet.

Ibn Iyās had studied with al-Suyūṭī, but, true to the rancorous age he lived in, he did not think much of him. The latter has already been referred to several times above. This is hardly surprising, for Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (849–911/1445–1505) was one of the last Muslim scholars who aimed to cover everything. His autobiography *Al-Taḥadduth bi-Ni'mat Allāh* (Speaking of God's bounty), despite its moralistic exordium, which offered the work as thanks to God and the life as an example for others to emulate, was a sustained piece of boasting riding on an academic's *curriculum vitae.* In the *Taḥadduth*, al-Suyūṭī listed 283 of his works. Al-Sakhāwī accused him of being too bookish. Certainly al-Suyūṭī's scholarship was of a backward-looking nature, and most of the books he boasted of having read were written at the beginning of the Mamluk period or even earlier. If modern scholars have regarded the Mamluk age as one of intellectual and literary decline, it is worth bearing in mind that this view was widely shared in the Mamluk age itself. Al-Suyūṭī deplored what he perceived to be an unprecedented dearth of scholarship and concomitant spread of ignorance throughout the Mamluk lands. Despite his faith in himself as a *mujaddid,* or renewer of the religious sciences, al-Suyūṭī shared al-Maqrīzī's gloom about the future. Fires and earthquakes were omens of further troubles to come and, although he loved Egypt, he predicted the land's ruin.[78]

In the Indian summer of the Mamluk sultanate, a number of literary salons flourished under the presidency of members of the Mamluk court. One such was established by Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Jaqmaq (847/1444), the son of the Sultan al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq and the heir apparent to the Mamluk sultanate. According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, the main source here, the prince was learned in history, rare anecdotes, and Turkish and Arab poetry. He was also fond of the Sufi practice of *samā'* (and this passion for music and song may have been part of a youthful revolt against his learned but austere father, who certainly disapproved of that sort of thing). The prince seems to have held soirees almost every evening, for Ibn

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"Al-Maqrīzī as a Poet," *Minbar al-Islām* 2 (1962): 28–30.

[77]Gaston Wiet, "L'Historien Abul Maḥāsin," *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte* 12 (1930): 89–105; Aḥmad Darrāj, "La vie d'Abū'l-Maḥāsin et son oeuvre," *Annales Islamologiques* 11 (1972): 163–81; William Popper, "Abū al-Maḥāsin Jamāl al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī," *EI*^{2}, 1:138.

[78]There is an extensive literature on al-Suyūṭī. See in particular Elizabeth Sartain, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī,* 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1975); Jean-Claude Garcin, "Histoire, opposition politique et piétisme

Ḥajar attended regularly two evenings a week, while one of his enemies also attended two nights a week, but on different nights. The prince was the patron of both Ibn Ḥajar's *Inbā' al-Ghumr* and Ibn Taghrībirdī's *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah.* According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad "almost flew for joy" when he heard that Ibn Taghrībirdī had commenced work on his chronicle.[79] Alas for Ibn Taghrībirdī's hopes, the prince died of a diet that involved drinking vinegar on an empty stomach.

Although we have no detailed account of the way in which Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad's salon conducted its affairs, at the very end of the Mamluk period the sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghūrī presided over one of the grandest and best-recorded salons. The sultan has already been mentioned as a poet in Turkish and Arabic. He also boasted of fluency in several other languages, and he commissioned the translation by Sharīf Ḥusayn ibn Ḥasan of Firdawsī's *Shāhnāmah* into Ottoman Turkish.[80] According to Sharīf's preface to the *Shāhnāmah,* al-Ghūrī knew Persian well, but he wanted to make the great work accessible to his amirs. He also presided over regular soirees, of which records were kept and placed in the royal library. The subjects that came up in the sultan's soirees ranged over history, geography, mythology, current affairs, and jest, but most commonly the topics bore upon religion. How can Ramadan be observed in the Arctic Circle? When and in what circumstances has the hajj ever been suspended? Is there anything in the hadith to license the playing of chess? The soirees were recorded in two sources: the *Nafā'is al-Majālis al-Sulṭānīyah* by Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad called Sharīf, covering a few months in 910/1505, and the *Kawkab al-Durrī fī Masā'il al-Ghūrī,* set in 915/1513–14, of which the first half is missing. Despite the participation of leading Egyptian Arab ulama in these sessions, one thing that emerges is the Turco-Persianate formation of court culture, and there are many references to Maḥmūd of Ghaznah, the *Shāhnāmah,* and the ideal ruler, Alexander (as featured in the *Shāhnāmah*). Al-Ghūrī's salon does not seem to have been particularly interested in the famous poets and prose writers of traditional Arab literary culture.[81] Like al-Ghūrī's enthusiasm for gardening on a grand scale in the Ottoman Turkish manner, the soirees provide evidence of the openness of the sixteenth-century Mamluk court to foreign exemplars and, more broadly, of the spread of an international court culture throughout the eastern Islamic lands.

The debt in all the above to the still scanty and patchy secondary literature must be evident and it is certain that many important and exciting discoveries

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traditionaliste dans le Ḥusn al Muḥādarat de Suyûti," *Annales Islamologiques* 7 (1967): 33–91.

[79]Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm,* 8:211.

[80]Flemming, "Šerīf"; Atıl, *Renaissance of Islam,* 264–65; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "Sultan al-Ghawrī and the Arts," *MSR* 6 (2002): 77.

[81]Awad, "Sultan al-Ghawrī," 321–22; Flemming, "Aus den Nachtgesprächen Sultan Gauris," 22–28;

remain to be made in the *terra incognita* of Mamluk literature. Although the backward-looking nature of so much Mamluk poetry and prose has been stressed here, this feature should not necessarily be identified with decadence.[82] For if Mamluk authors imitated and sought to surpass their Abbasid predecessors, it was also true that Abbasid authors had looked back on and imitated their pre-Islamic and Umayyad precursors. In both periods originality was only valued within quite close constraints. In his *Literary History of the Arabs*, R. A. Nicholson, while confessing to "a desultory and imperfect acquaintance with their work," ventured that even the best of the poets of the Mamluk period were "merely elegant and brilliantly accomplished artists, playing brilliantly with words and phrases, but doing little else."[83] In *Arabic Literature*, Sir Hamilton Gibb characterised the literary production of the Mamluk age as follows: "the output was enormous throughout, but the qualities of originality, virility, and imagination, weak from the first, die away completely by the sixteenth century."[84] While it is hard to dissent from these timeworn verdicts, it is nevertheless the case that modern western literary theory accords originality and "virility" a status that writers and critics of the Mamluk period would have found excessive. On the other hand the versatility, erudition, and literary stamina of most of the writers mentioned above is quite astonishing.

Berkey, "Mamluks as Muslims," 170–73; Behrens-Abouseif, "Al-Ghawrī and the Arts," 76–78.

[82]See in this issue Bauer, "Communication and Emotion."

[83]Nicholson, *A Literary History*, 448.

[84]Hamilton Gibb, *Arabic Literature: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1962), 142.

XVII

Orientalism and the early development of crusader studies

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the grandiose and luxuriously furnished Benedictine monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Prés on the left bank of the Seine was the headquarters of the reformed congregation of Saint Maur. The Maurists believed that intellectual and specifically historical study could be a form of prayer, and the congregation's founder, Dom Tarisse, had issued instructions in 1632 concerning the training of monks in documentary research. Thereafter pioneering work was done on the critical study of historical documents by Jean Mabillon (1632–1707), most notably in his *De re diplomatica* (1681). The serious study of the crusades from Arabic and other oriental sources essentially started as a Maurist project, based on the library of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Thanks to a well-directed policy of acquisitions, this monastery possessed one of the greatest libraries in Europe. Moreover, the Maurist researchers had permission to borrow from the Bibliothèque Royale, as well as from Colbert's library. There is no space even to list here all the monumental historiographical enterprises that the monks planned or undertook. Maurists worked under the patronage of the French monarchs, and one of their grandest projects was the history of the French monarchy. Naturally that history was conceived by them as including the history of the crusades, for in the eighteenth century the crusades were thought of as a largely French and royal enterprise, as something that shed a reflected glory on the royal house of Bourbon. So in the early eighteenth century the Maurists had begun work on collecting sources for the history of the crusades and the Latin Orient.[1]

The monks were aided in their researches by an unofficial team of lay experts. It was the custom for lay scholars and monks to meet informally after vespers every Sunday at Saint-Germain-des-Prés to discuss such topics as palaeography, codicology, chronology, numismatics and the translation

[1] On Maurists in general, see J. Leroy, *St-Germain-des-Prés, capitale des lettres* (Paris, 1973), pp. 29–180; D. Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises* (London, 1963), pp. 34–62; *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 9 (New York, 1967), pp. 508–9.

of oriental languages. The Maurist scholars Jean Mabillon and Bertrand de Montfaucon (an expert on Greek palaeography) naturally played a leading role in these soirées. The lay participants included the Byzantinist, Charles Du Cange and Etienne Baluze, the expert on family history, as well as the Orientalists, Barthélémy d'Herbelot and Antoine Galland.[2] D'Herbelot (1625–95) was the compiler and translator of the *Bibliothèque orientale*, an encyclopaedia that concentrated mostly on the literature and religion of the Arabs, Turks and Persians. It was a work that continued to be much read and heavily cited well into the nineteenth century.[3] D'Herbelot had been assisted in his researches by his closest friend, the learned abbot, Eusèbe Renaudot (1646–1720). Renaudot, the former secretary of Bossuet, though chiefly famous as a Hebraist, knew some Arabic, and he had used it in his studies of the oriental Christians. He also composed a life of Saladin (which remained in manuscript) and collected oriental manuscripts, which he left in his will to Saint-Germain-des-Prés.[4]

D'Herbelot died before he could see his great work through the press, and it only appeared in 1697 under the editorship of his colleague, Galland, who, of course, is more famous for his work on *The Thousand and One Nights*. 'Antoine Galland (1646–1715), the first European translator of the *Nights*, played so large a part in discovering the tales, in popularizing them in Europe and in shaping what would come to be regarded as the canonical collection that, at some risk of hyperbole and paradox, he has been called the real author of the *Nights*.'[5] Galland seems to have been the first to propose using Arabic sources to shed light on the history of the crusades. It is also plausible that he passed this notion on to his Maurist friends, so that the oriental volumes of the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*, which belatedly appeared in the nineteenth century, may be accounted as Galland's literary grandchildren.

It was in his preface to d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque* that Galland put forward the view that an understanding of Islam and Arabic would enhance people's understanding of the crusades and correct what had hitherto been a one-sided picture. In fact there was not much in the *Bibliothèque* that had any bearing on the history of the crusades. The subject featured

[2] Mohamed Abdel-Halim, *Antoine Galland: sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1964), pp. 122–5; Leroy, *St-Germain-des-Prés*, pp. 45–6.

[3] H. Laurens, *Aux Sources de l'Orientalisme: La Bibliothèque orientale de Barthélemy d'Herbelot* (Paris, 1978); J. Fück, *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1920), pp. 98–100; Abdel-Halim, *Antoine Galland*, pp. 85–8.

[4] *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, 2nd edn., 45 vols. (Paris, 1852–66), 35: 41–2; Laurens, *Aux Sources de l'Orientalisme*, pp. 15–16, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 12: 375–6.

[5] R. Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (London, 1994), p. 14.

prominently only in the entry on Saladin (which is more of a literary chrestomathy than a systematic account of the sultan's career) and, for example, d'Herbelot's entry on Nūr al-Dīn hardly mentions the Franks at all. It seems that at one stage Galland himself proposed to fill part of the deficiency in the *Bibliothèque's* coverage, for in 1709 he was working on *Les Ayoubites, ou Histoire de Saladin et des Princes de sa famille qui ont régné en Egypte et en Syrie*.[6] However, Galland's unfinished history of the Ayyubid dynasty, like Renaudot's history of Saladin, was never published. Galland's unfinished history chiefly reproduced the relevant bits of a chronicle of Jerusalem by the sixteenth-century local historian Mujīr al-Dīn al-'Ulaymī (d. 1522), as well as extracts from the Ayyubid prince Abū al-Fidā's chronicle, *Al-Mukhtaṣar fi akbār al-bashar*. D'Herbelot and Galland were pious antiquarians who translated their sources rather than thought about them. Their accounts of oriental history were scissors-and-paste affairs.

Although the translation of Arabic sources to shed light on the crusades seems to have been Galland's in conception – a project which only properly came to fruit in the early nineteenth century with the publication of the *Recueil* – some Arabic chronicles that happened to have a bearing on the crusades had already been edited or translated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Al-Makīn ibn al-'Amīd's *Majmu' al-mubarak* was the first Arabic chronicle to be edited and printed in western Europe under the title of *Historia Saracenica*. The early Orientalists mistrusted infidel writings and preferred to translate Christian sources, and al-Makīn, who lived in the thirteenth century, was a Copt. The great Dutch Arabist, Thomas Erpenius (1584–1624), worked on the Bodleian manuscript, because the famous classicist and polymath, Joseph Scaliger, wanted to use it for establishing the chronology of the world. But although al-Makīn's chronicle, which begins with the life of Muhammad and the rise of Islam, sheds some light on crusader history, for it ends in 658/1260, Erpenius died of plague before his edition and translation of the chronicle into Latin was ready for publication, and his edition, which Jacob Golius published at Leiden in 1625, only ran to 1117/18.[7] Later Purchas translated it from Latin into English, and Pierre Vattier translated it into French. A translation (into

[6] Abdel-Halim, *Antoine Galland*, pp. 239–43. Galland's manuscript survives in the Bibliothèque Nationale as MS no. 607.

[7] On the life and works of Erpenius, see Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 59–73; A. Hamilton, 'Arabic Studies in the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Philologia Arabica: Arabische studiën en drukken in de Nederlanden*, ed. F. de Nave (Antwerp, 1986), pp. xcix–ciii.

French) of the last and most original part of al-Makīn's chronicle did not appear until 1994.[8]

The next chronicler to be partially translated, Abū al-Faraj, known as Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286), was also a Christian, and his *Ta'rīkh mukhṭasar al-duwal*, or *History of the Dynasties*, ran from the Creation to the late thirteenth century. The great British Arabist, Edward Pococke (1604–91), first produced his *Specimen Historiae Arabum* (1650), a translation of Bar Hebraeus on the early pre-Islamic and Islamic periods, which was chiefly important not so much for the translation itself, but for Pococke's wide-ranging notes on all aspects of Islamic culture. These notes were to be heavily drawn upon by Gibbon and other historians. In 1663 Pococke published his *Historia compendiosa dynastarium*, a complete translation of Bar Hebraeus' chronicle into Latin, to which he appended a brief account of later dynasties, including the Mamlūks, Ilkhans and Ottomans.[9] However, Pococke's work on Bar Hebraeus received little attention and, depressed by this, he then turned his energy to studying the minor biblical prophets. It should be noted that, though al-Makīn and Bar Hebraeus were Christians, their chronicles drew heavily on Muslim works, and their accounts of the crusades do not differ greatly from those given in Muslim chronicles.

The Ayyubid prince and descendant of Saladin, Abū al-Fidā (1273–1331), attracted early attention in the west. One of the reasons for this favour among the gentlemanly scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was that Abū al-Fidā was a prince. Pococke had cited him in his supplement to the translation of Bar Hebraeus. However, it was only in the eighteenth century that an edition of Abū al-Fidā's chronicle, *al-Mukhtaṣar fi akhbār al-bashar*, was produced. The editor was Johann Jacob Reiske (1716–74), the greatest Arabist of his age. Reiske's *Annales Muslemici* was posthumously published in five volumes in Copenhagen in 1789–94. However, as we have already seen with Pococke's translation of Bar Hebraeus, popular interest in oriental matters was extremely limited. In 1754 Reiske had begun a Latin translation of Abū al-Fidā's Annals, but, having found that he was only able to sell thirty copies, he stopped the print-run.[10] Reinaud was later to

[8] Al-Makīn ibn al-'Amīd, *Chronique des Ayyoubides (602–658/1205–6–1259–60)* trans. A.-M. Eddé and F. Micheau (Paris 1994). This translation was published under the auspices of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres.

[9] G. J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisdome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 125, 160–2; P. M. Holt, 'An Oxford Arabist: Edward Pococke (1604–91)', in P. M. Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London, 1973), pp. 11, 18–19; Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 88, 90.

[10] Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 201–2.

characterize Abū al-Fidā's work as the most important Arabic history to have been published in Europe. In fact the princely author's reputation was unjustified, as, for the most part, he reproduced other, better sources, in particular Ibn al-Athīr.

The life and legend of the chivalric Saladin continued to exercise its fascination in the Age of the Enlightenment. In 1732 Albert Schultens (1686–1750), a professor in Leiden, published an edition and translation into Latin of Bahā' al-Dīn ibn Shaddād's life of Saladin, *al-Nawādir al-sulṭānīyya*. To this translation, with the title, *Vita et res gestae sultani Saladini*, Schultens added a selection from Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī's *Fatḥ al-Qussī fī Fatḥ al-Qudsī* as an appendix. Schultens' translation was drawn upon by Louis-François-Claude Marin in his *Histoire de Saladin, Sulthan d'Egypte et de Syrie* (1758). According to Lane-Poole, this biography 'has only to be read to be admired. He made full use of the crusading chronicles and of Schulten's edition of Baha-ed-din, and he consulted Ibn al-Athīr's *Atabegs* in an Arabic manuscript at Paris'. However, Lane-Poole added that Marin relied overmuch on compilations like the *Bibliothèque orientale*.[11]

Like several other Orientalists before and after him, Joseph de Guignes (1721–1800) worked in the Bibliothèque Royale. In the eighteenth century the Royal Library was not just a repository of books, but an important centre for research, especially into oriental matters. De Guignes knew Chinese and various other oriental languages and did important work in Sanskrit and Buddhist studies. His *Histoire générale des Huns* (5 volumes, Paris, 1756–8) did not restrict itself to investigating the Huns and is, in fact, mostly about Mongol history, but the first volume included a guide to the princes of the crusader states. The *Histoire générale* was really a loosely structured miscellany of exotic erudition, but it was frequently cited by early historians of the crusades, who had no independent access to the oriental sources.[12]

Before returning to the Maurist project, it is instructive to consider how many, or rather how few Arab sources were available to Edward Gibbon when he came to write an account of the crusades in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–88). As a young man, Gibbon had proposed to read Arabic at Oxford and, though his tutor discouraged him from this, he remained keenly interested in the history of the Islamic lands and was well read in the subject.[13] According to one of his biographers, half his history was written from the point of view of a melancholy ancient

[11] S. Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (London, 1898), pp. x–xi.

[12] On De Guignes, see *Biographie Universelle*, 18: 127–9.

[13] B. Lewis, 'Gibbon on Muhammad', *Daedalus* (1976), 89–101; D. O. Morgan, 'Edward Gibbon and the East', *Iran* 33 (1995), 85–92.

Roman, but 'the other half from the point of view of a Turk or Arab impatient for the end to come'.[14] Nevertheless, the material he was able to draw on was scrappy and much of it secondary. For example, when writing about the Seljuk Sultan Sanjar, he had recourse to the *Bibliothèque orientale* and de Guignes' work on the Huns. When writing about Saladin, Gibbon was able to draw on Pococke's translation of Bar Hebraeus' *Dynasties* (though he deprecated 'the barbarous Latin of Pococke's Abulpharagius') and Schultens' translation of Bahā' al-Dīn ibn Shaddād (whom Gibbon characterized as 'an honest bigot') together with Schultens' copious extracts from Abū al-Fidā in the same edition. He also made use of the article in the *Bibliothèque orientale*. On the Mamlūks he cited the eighteenth-century traveller Volney's *Voyages* on 'the avarice and insolence of these strangers', but it is not clear what else he consulted, apart presumably from the *Bibliothèque orientale* yet again.

To return to the Maurists, in the late eighteenth century the industrious monks decided that in order to get a full picture of the history of the crusades it would be necessary to assemble the relevant Arabic sources and publish them. In 1770 the decision was taken to entrust the task to Dom Berthereau. George François Berthereau (1732–94) had entered the congregation of Saint Maur as a young man. At the age of twenty he started the study of Aramaic, Syriac and Hebrew, and he rose to become Professor of Greek and Hebrew at the abbey of Saint Denis. Having been assigned the task of researching the Arabic chronicles, he set about diligently learning the language, for hitherto he had not even known the alphabet. Having mastered the rudiments of the language, he set about examining the manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Royale and the library of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. As we have already noted, Abbé Renaudot had assembled a significant number of Arabic manuscripts for the monks' library. In his studies Berthereau was somewhat hindered by the assistance of a villainous and idle Syrian Arabic speaker called Joseph Chahin. (The austere and erudite Silvestre de Sacy was later to refer to Chahin as 'crapuleux'.) Berthereau by contrast was energetic, if somewhat unsystematic. He worked on Abū Shāma's history, the *Kitāb al-Rawdatayn*, Ibn Abd al-Ẓāhir's *Tashrīf* (a life of Qalāwūn), Mujīr al-Dīn al-'Ulaymi's history of Jerusalem and chronicles by Ibn Taghrībirdī, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Maqrīzī and others. According to Silvestre de Sacy, Berthereau's translation tended to be rather rough, and what he could not understand, he simply omitted. Berthereau toiled for thirty years, assembling notes and making partial translations (into Latin naturally), without actually

[14] G. M. Young, *Gibbon*, 2nd edn. (London, 1948), pp. 13–14.

publishing anything. Apart from Berthereau's inability to bring anything to a conclusion (and he had planned to make a special study of the Ayyubids), the other major problem was the great expense and difficulty of printing in Arabic. However, he left an impressive body of handwritten work bearing on the crusades amounting to 1,100 folio pages.[15]

The French Revolution put a stop to all the Maurist projects. The order's Superior General Dom Antoine Cheveneux and forty of his monks went to the guillotine in 1792. The reliquaries and tombs were destroyed and other treasures of Saint-Germain-des-Prés were dispersed and the place was turned into a prison for Charlotte Corday, Madame Roland and other victims destined for the guillotine. In 1794 a fire in the abbey destroyed many of the manuscripts and Dom Berthereau died in that same year. Berthereau's main legacy to the future and his chief claim to fame was not the chaotic mass of poorly translated materials, but rather the fact that he had inspired the man who was to become the greatest Orientalist of the nineteenth century to take up the study of Arabic. Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838) was the real founder of Orientalism as an academic discipline. As a young man, he had encountered Dom Berthereau in a park close by Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and in a series of conversations the monk persuaded Silvestre de Sacy to study Arabic so that more material relating to the history of the crusades could be translated.[16] Although Silvestre de Sacy had a few lessons in Arabic from a dragoman, he was in practice, like Berthereau, self-taught. Silvestre de Sacy taught himself to read and write Arabic by copying out and memorizing classical Arabic texts (and he never learnt to speak the language). Berthereau persuaded him to translate fragments of Kamāl al-Dīn ibn al-'Adīm's *Zubdat al-ḥalab*, a history of Aleppo, as well as some fragments of Abū Shāma's *Kitāb al-Rawdatayn* that bore upon the crusades. Silvestre de Sacy, who was not especially interested in the crusades, never published them, but later passed them on to Friedrich Wilken, a German historian of the crusades.[17] Wilken was the first historian of the crusades to make effective use of oriental sources (though he knew no oriental languages himself).

[15] On Berthereau, see A. I. Silvestre de Sacy, 'Notice des manuscripts laissés par D. Berthereau, religeux bénédictin de congregation de Saint-Maur, mort en 1794', *Magasin Encyclopédique*, year 7, vol. 2 (1801), 7–26; *Biographie Universelle*, 4: 128–9; M. Reinaud, introduction to *Chroniques arabes* = vol. 4 of J. F. Michaud, *Bibliothèque des Croisades* (Paris, 1829), pp. vi–viii; H. Dehérain, 'Les origines du recueil des "Historiens des croisades" ', *Journal des Savants* n.s. 17 (1919), 261–2.

[16] Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, p. 142.

[17] Reinaud, *Bibliothèque*, p. xx. On the career of Silvestre de Sacy in general, see Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 140–57; H. Dehérain, *Silvestre de Sacy* (Paris, 1938); H. Derenbourg, *Silvestre de Sacy (1768–1838)* (Paris, 1895).

After the suppression of the Maurists and other orders, a secular body, the Institut de France (founded in 1795), took over the publication of the *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*. In 1816 it was broken up and the old academies that had flourished under the monarchy were revived, including the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. In 1801 Silvestre de Sacy had been instructed by a commission of the Institut to examine Berthereau's manuscripts. This was hard work, and Reinaud later commented that the monk's handwritten translations were so difficult to read that it was sometimes necessary to have recourse to the original Arabic in order to decipher them. Also Berthereau had indiscriminately copied what were effectively the same passages in early and late chronicles. Silvestre de Sacy produced a list of the relevant Berthereau papers, amounting to 200 printed pages and 1,100 manuscript folio pages. In 1813 these papers passed into the hands of the Bibliothèque Imperiale (formerly the Bibliothèque Royale, later the Bibliothèque Nationale). In the nineteenth century the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, which had originally been set up by Colbert in 1663 to supervise the composition in Latin of inscriptions for medals and monuments, took over various Maurist projects, including that of publishing the chief Arabic sources for the history of the crusades. In nineteenth-century France the history of the crusades continued to be considered part of the history of the French monarchy and nobility. The Syria the academicians studied was the Syria of Godfrey de Bouillon and Philip II of France; the Egypt they studied was the Egypt of Louis IX. Advised by Silvestre de Sacy and his students and with Berthereau's researches as a starting point, the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres planned a series of volumes of the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades* that would be devoted to oriental sources. However, the work went extremely slowly and in the meantime there were important developments elsewhere.

In 1820 Charles Mills' *History of the Crusades* appeared. Mills made use of de Guignes' oriental material and, for his account of Saladin's career, drew on d'Herbelot, as well as Schultens' translation. According to Mills (who of course wrote out of sheer ignorance), it 'may be regretted perhaps, that the Arabic authors are so few when compared with the Latins. But the monkish histories bear great marks of truth.'[18] Wilken and Michaud were more determined in their attempts to tap oriental sources. In his eight-volume *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Leipzig, 1817–32), Friedrich Wilken (1777–1840) made use wherever possible of Arabic sources that had been translated. Although he had no direct access to Arabic, he was much helped by Silvestre

[18] C. Mills, *History of the Crusades*, III (London, 1820), p. 443.

de Sacy's apprentice translations. Joseph François Michaud took more active steps to make some of the relevant Arabic material available, and in 1819 he recruited the assistance of Joseph-Toussaint Reinaud (1795–1867) to provide him with such material. Reinaud had studied classics in his youth and entered a seminary, but he left it to pursue oriental subjects and, like almost every Orientalist of note in the early nineteenth century, he studied with Silvestre de Sacy. Unlike his teacher, Reinaud was interested in the crusades, and he had published articles in early issues of the *Journal Asiatique* on the life of Saladin, European relations with the Mongols and related matters. Michaud published *Bibliothèque des Croisades* in four volumes in 1829. Three of these volumes were devoted to western sources. The fourth volume contained versions by Reinaud of Arabic sources found in the Bibliothèque Royale. (Reinaud had by then become curator of the library's oriental manuscripts, which by now included those formerly assembled by the Maurists).[19] However, much of what Reinaud translated was not translated from the original Arabic, but rather from the scrappy Latin translations of Berthereau. Michaud, a friend of Chateaubriand, took the unapologetic view that the crusades redounded to the glory of France and the French monarchy. Reinaud took the same view. In his 'Observations . . . sur les Chroniques Arabes', which prefaced his translations, he wrote as follows: 'Les croisades forment, sans contredit, la plus brillante époque du moyen âge: c'est là qu'on trouve les plus beaux exemples de la bravoure et de la grandeur d'âme de nos pères . . .'[20] Later, Reinaud was to rework and correct Berthereau's translations and, later yet, de Slane was to rework and correct Reinaud's rather careless translations. (It has been a feature of the history of Arabic studies in Europe that each generation of translators has found the work of their predecessors to be inadequate.) Reinaud was to be criticized for frequently involving himself in big projects but then rarely finishing them. Like so many early Orientalists, and like Michaud himself, he had a scrappy scissors-and-paste approach to the compilation of history. Reinaud's translations included extracts from Ibn al-Athīr, Bahā' al-Dīn ibn Shaddād, Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī, Kamāl al-Dīn ibn al-'Adīm, Abū Shāma, 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdadi, Mufaḍḍal, Ibn al-Jawzī, Ibn al-Muyassar, Ibn Khallikān, Yafi'i, Ibn Wāṣil, Abū al-Fidā, Bar Hebraeus (from Syriac), Shāfi' ibn 'Alī, Ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, al-Makīn, al-Dhahabī, Ibn al-Furāt, al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Suyūṭī and Mujīr

[19] A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade: Historiography and Bibliography* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1962), pp. 60, 69–70; E. Siberry, *The New Crusaders: Images of the Crusades in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 5–8.

[20] Reinaud, *Bibliothèque*, IV, p. v.

al-Dīn al-'Ulaymī. Reinaud had a rough way with the sources he worked on. He commented on Shafi' ibn 'Ali's lack of taste. He had reservations about al-Maqrīzī's sanity (reservations which I share). He also complained about the naïvety and poverty of the Arabic language and wrote that he had found no words for 'garrison', 'provisioning' and so forth. According to him, Arabic historians were also weak in following a logical progression of ideas. Reinaud not only improved the style of his original sources, but also cut out what he judged to be irrelevant to the story of the crusades.[21]

Some of the early Orientalists had a rather high-handed attitude to their sources, and crusading historiography was not always well served by fanciful interpretations of the material. The Austrian Orientalist, Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856), after a career as a dragoman and consul in the Near East, retired to write and publish a huge and diverse amount of material that purported to be scholarly. However, much of what he produced was carelessly researched or inaccurately translated and interpreted in the light of his somewhat extreme political and religious convictions. Among other things, he collected hundreds of Arabic words meaning camel, he translated the Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ of Shiraz, translated some of *The Thousand and One Nights* and he wrote on Arabic seals, the Golden Horde and the condition of the Christians and Jews in early fourteenth-century Egypt. He published extracts from the Mujīr al-Dīn al-'Ulaymi, the chronicler of Jerusalem, relevant to the crusades (though Reinaud later questioned the accuracy of the translations). Hammer-Purgstall's best and most substantial work was his ten-volume *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches* (1827–35).[22]

Nineteenth-century historians were prone to link crusading with chivalry, the first being an outcome of the second. Readings of Ariosto and Scott played as large a part in shaping the image of the crusades as familiarity with the primary sources. If chivalry was such an essential feature of the crusader mentality, may it not have played a similar role in shaping the moral framework of the crusaders' adversaries? Hammer-Purgstall's essay 'Sur la galanterie de Saladin (Salah ed-Dīn) et de son frère Malek Adel (Melekaadel)' should be seen in this light.[23] As we shall see, Hammer-Purgstall's preoccupation with the chivalry of the Arabs, and more specifically that of Saladin, was to cast a long shadow. Nineteenth-century

[21] On Reinaud, see G. Dugat, *Histoire des Orientalistes de l'Europe du XIIe au XIXe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1868), 1: 186–231; Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, p. 153.

[22] On Hammer-Purgstall in general, see Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 158–66; W. Bietak, *Gottes ist der Orient: Gottes ist der Okzident: eine studie über Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall* (Vienna and Zurich, 1948).

[23] *Fundgruben des Orients*, 1 (1809), 141–4.

researchers in Middle Eastern history were excessively preoccupied with Arab chivalry, feudalism and heraldry.

Like his contemporary, the right-wing royalist Silvestre de Sacy, Hammer-Purgstall had an obsessive, hostile interest in the Druze and the Isma'ilis, and in his history of the Isma'ili sect of the Assassins, which flourished in Persia and Syria in the crusade period, the *Geschichte der Assassinen aus morgenländischen Quellen* (Tubingen, 1818), he described the Assassins as 'that union of impostors and dupes which, under the mask of a more austere creed and severer morals, undermined all religion and morality'. He presented them as the medieval forerunners of such murderous scoundrels as the Illuminati, Carbonari, Freemasons and Jacobins. In a previous article he had argued on the basis of legendary and factitious evidence that the leader of the Assassin sect made use of drugs in order to dupe and persuade his followers that he could admit them to the Garden of Paradise if they carried out his murderous missions. Apart from Marco Polo, Hammer-Purgstall relied on an Arabic romance, similar in type to stories found in *The Thousand and One Nights*, which survived as a manuscript in Vienna, the *Sīrat Amīr al-Mu'minim al-Ḥākim bi-'Amr Allāh*. The romance had been erroneously attributed to Ibn Khallikān, but really dates from the late Mamlūk period.[24] Hammer-Purgstall, who also compared the Assassins to the Knights Templar, played a leading role in disseminating the notion that the Templars were devotees of some oriental cult and that they worshipped Gnostic idols.[25] Yet another of his fantasies was that the origins of the Holy Grail were to be found in the cup of salted water offered to members of medieval Islamic *futuwwa* brotherhoods (leagues of young men).

Even in his own lifetime Hammer-Purgstall's romantic approach to the Orient was giving way to the more scientific and disciplined philological approach to Arabic sources espoused by Silvestre de Sacy and those who had been taught by him. Étienne-Marc Quatremère (1782–1857), like his teacher Silvestre de Sacy, was a fervent Christian and royalist who had loathed the Revolution and all its works. After studying the classics, Quatremère taught himself Hebrew. At the École des Langues Vivantes he fell under the spell of Silvestre de Sacy. Quatremère mastered a wide range of oriental languages

[24] 'Sur le paradis du Vieux de la Montagne', *Fundgruben des Orients* 3 (1813), 201–6. See also F. Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis* (London, 1994), pp. 118–20.

[25] J. von Hammer-Purgstall, 'Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum seu fratres militiae templi, qua Gnostici et quidem Ophiani apostasiae, idoluliquae et impuritatis convicti per ipsa eorum monumenta', *Fundgruben des Orients* 6 (1818), 1–120, 455–99; 'Die Schuld der Templer', *Denkschriften der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Classe* 6 (1835). See also N. Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt* (London, 1975), pp. 87–8; P. Partner, *The Murdered Magicians: The Templars and Their Myth* (London, 1981), pp. 138–145, 156–7.

and topics, and his work on the fifteenth-century chronicler, al-Maqrīzī, was only one of several projects. (He also did important work on the historian Ibn Khaldūn, as well as on Phoenician and Persian writings.) Quatremère's original plan was to translate the whole of al-Maqrīzī's chronicle, the *Kītāb al-Sulūk*, but having discovered that the parts of it dealing with the Fatimids and the Ayyubids were scheduled to appear in the *Recueil* (though they never did), he began his edition and translation with the year 648/1250. He had planned to translate the rest of al-Maqrīzī's chronicle and then add a translation of Maqrīzī's topography of Cairo, the *Khiṭaṭ* as well. However, he did not get beyond the year 708/1309. *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks d'Egypte* was published in 1845. Quatremère, like his teacher, was more of a philologist than historian, and his work is still of value for the (sometimes absurdly) lengthy philologically oriented footnotes. He particularly concentrated on elucidating meanings of words that had not been included in the medieval dictionaries of classical Arabic. His footnotes, which sometimes amounted to chrestomathies in miniature, were to be heavily drawn upon by Reinhart Dozy in his *Supplément aux dictionaires Arabes* (Leiden, 1888), and later they furnished the starting point for the investigations of Gaudefroy-Demombynes and David Ayalon into the structure of the Mamlūk administration and army. The translation of al-Maqrīzī, a compilator of earlier thirteenth and fourteenth-century works, also provided readers of French with a basic narrative from the Muslim point of view of the Crusade of Louis IX and the final reconquest of the crusader principalities. Quatremère also worked on the Arabic sources that were due to be included in the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*, but he died without seeing any tangible results.[26]

Charles Henri Auguste Schefer (1820–98) had been first Dragoman to the French Embassy in Constantinople in 1849, and he only left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to occupy Quatremère's chair after the latter's death in 1857. His services in the Crimean War led the Ottoman Sultan Abd al-Majid to offer him a choice of manuscripts from the library of the Serail. Schefer amassed a great collection of Arabic, Persian and Turkish manuscripts (791) that eventually passed to Bibliothèque Nationale. He was a man of considerable style and wealth, and the British Orientalist, Denison Ross, who studied with Schefer in Paris, remembered going to visit him in his château in Chambéry.[27] Schefer's contribution to crusading studies was less substantial than that of his predecessors, as he was chiefly

[26] On Quatremère, see Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 152–3.
[27] E. Dennison Ross, *Both Ends of the Candle* (London, 1943) p. 42.

interested in Persian literature. However, he did translate materials that had a bearing on the crusades, including al-Harawī's twelfth-century account of Muslim places of pilgrimage in Syria and elsewhere.[28] Schefer also worked on French texts that had a bearing on the crusades, including an edition of Bertrandon de la Brocquière's fourteenth-century pilgrimage narrative and a study of the Hospitaller memorandum, *La Devise des Chemins de Babiloine*.[29]

Only in the late nineteenth century, from 1872 onwards, did translations of the Arabic sources begin to lumber into print in the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*, published under the auspices of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Reinaud died in the course of the publication of the five volumes, and his work as editor was taken over by William Macguckin de Slane (another of Silvestre de Sacy's pupils); and, when de Slane in turn died in 1878, Barbier de Meynard oversaw the publication of the last volumes. *Historiens Orientaux* included most of the standard authorities, including Abū al-Fidā, Abū Shāma, Bahā' al-Dīn ibn Shaddād and Ibn al-Athīr. For a long time it provided western historians with the basic material in Arabic to check against western sources. For example, Steven Runciman's three-volume *History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, 1951–4) draws very heavily on these translations. However, the translations were not very accurate. Moreover, they were for the most part translated extracts only, and, as Atiya has noted, the translators failed to indicate the location and length of the omissions. It was inevitable that the selections should make the Arab chroniclers seem even more preoccupied with the crusades than they actually were. Also the omission, for example, of all of Abū Shāma's poetry to be found in his chronicle meant that some rather important political messages couched as poems had been ignored.[30]

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Orientalists had largely confined themselves to identifying, collecting, editing and translating the Arabic sources. Lives of Saladin apart, there were no biographies of Muslim rulers and no sustained attempts to provide a history of the Fatimids, Seljuks, Ayyubids or Mamlūks. When they did begin to be produced, the earliest histories of the relevant dynasties were hardly more than uncritical

[28] 'Aboul Hassan Aly el Herewy: Indications sur les lieux de pèlegrinage', *AOL* 1 (1881), 587–609.

[29] Bertrandon de la Brocquière, *Voyage d'Outremer*, Recueil de voyages et de documents pour servir à l'histoire de la géographie depuis le XIIIe jusqu'à la fin du XIVe siècle 12 (Paris, 1892); 'Étude sur la Devise des Chemins de Babloine', *AOL* 2 (1884), 89–101. See R. Irwin, 'How many Miles to Babylon? The Devise des Chemins de Babiloine Redated', in *MO*, 1, pp. 57–63.

[30] *RHC Or.*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1872–1906). On the *Recueil* and its origins, see W. M. de Slane's introduction to volume 1; Dehérain, 'Les origines du Recueil', pp. 260–6; Atiya, *Crusade*, pp. 29–47.

compilations based on Arabic sources that were often themselves only late compilations of earlier sources. Gustav Weil (1808–89) produced what was effectively the first history of the Mamlūk dynasty, though it appeared in the form of a history of the Abbasid Caliphate. Having written a three-volume history of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, he produced a further two volumes that were nominally devoted to the history of the shadow Abbasid Caliphate in Cairo (from 659/1261 onwards), but which were in practice a history of the Mamlūk sultans who controlled the caliphs in Cairo. Thus Weil chronicled the achievements of the sultans who masterminded the final assaults against what was left of the crusader principalities in the late thirteenth century. Weil's history of the caliphs was strongly influenced by Leopold von Ranke's *Die Romanischen Päpste* (1834–7), and for Weil, as for Ranke, the chief importance of the crusades was its long-term effect in consolidating the European community. Weil produced dry summaries and extracts of his Arabic sources with little added in the way of analysis or opinion.[31]

When Sir William Muir (1819–1905) came to produce his history of the Mamlūks he drew very heavily indeed on Weil, though Muir inserted his own strong opinions about the wickedness of both crusaders and Muslims. He had had a distinguished career in the Indian administration (where he played a leading role in the struggle against female infanticide), before turning to academic matters and becoming Principal of Edinburgh University.[32] His experience of the Indian Mutiny may also have influenced his horror of Islam. Muir was a committed Christian who believed that Muhammad was a servant of the Devil. (In 1887 the Religious Tract Society published his *The Rise and Decline of Islam*.) However, despite his fervent faith, Muir was also much influenced by Gibbon, and the unflattering picture he drew of the crusades in *The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt* (London, 1896) probably owed a lot to his reading of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. According to Muir's introduction, the 'Crusades aggravated the intolerance of the day and promoted deeds of bloodshed and cruelty . . . And while it might have been expected that the constant falsification of the Heavenly promises made by the Roman conclave would have weakened, if not altogether destroyed, faith in the guidance of the western Church, we

[31] G. Weil, *Geshichte des Abbasidenchalifates in Ägypten* (Mannheim and Stuttgart, 1860–2). On Weil, see Fück, *Arabischen Studien*, pp. 175–6; D. M. Dunlop, 'Some Remarks on Weil's History of the Crusades', in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (London, 1962), pp. 315–29.

[32] On Muir's career, see *Dictionary of National Biography, Twentieth Century, 1901–11* (Oxford, 1920), pp. 659–61.

find, strange to say, that the crusading sentiment had the directly contrary effect, introduced the reign of inquisitorial terror, filled the coffers of the Roman See, and riveted the shackles of Papal dominancy.'[33] When he came to recount how the Mamlūk Sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl captured Acre in 1291, he commented, 'Thus, after two centuries of a chequered life, maintained by means abhorrent from the Prince of peace, the great Crusade came to a sad end . . .'[34] Muir was not much more fond of the Mamlūks, who with few exceptions were presented by him as cruel, treacherous, rapacious and, of course, devotees of a false creed. Although he listed some of the key Arabic sources for the period, it is not clear how many of these he cited directly from the Arabic. Muir was comfortable in German and he relied heavily on Weil's earlier work, just as he also relied a great deal on Wilken for the details of crusading history.[35]

Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) did not write about Saladin, though he did produce an influential life of Muhammad which was certainly read by all the leading British Orientalists of the nineteenth century. In *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841) Carlyle had presented history as being primarily the story of heroes, great men who rose above the common crowd to offer that crowd hope. The lives of heroes should be recounted in order to inspire emulation. Carlyle envisaged history as a series of romantic incidents, and those historians who took him as their model used vividly imagined scenes and dramatic moments to pace out their narratives. Carlyle had proclaimed that history was 'the essence of innumerable biographies'. The first substantial biography of Saladin to be based on Arabic sources was written according to the Carlylean model. Stanley Lane-Poole (1854–1931) was Professor of Arabic at Trinity College Dublin and grand-nephew of the more famous Orientalist, Edward William Lane.[36] Lane-Poole's *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (1898) presented a hero whose nobility of spirit raised him above his infidel subjects. Lane-Poole actually felt that the Orientals were not up to appreciating Saladin at his true heroic value and he concluded his book with these words: 'the character of the great Sultan, however, appeals more strongly to Europeans than to Moslems, who admire his chivalry less than his warlike triumphs. To us it is the generosity of the character, rather than the success of the career, that makes Saladin a

[33] W. Muir, *The Mamluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt: A History of Egypt from the Fall of the Ayyubite Dynasties to the Conquest by the Osmanlis A.D. 1216–1517* (London, 1896), p. xxii.

[34] *Ibid*., p. 45. [35] Dunlop, 'Some Remarks', pp. 327–9.

[36] On S. Lane-Poole, see *Dictionary of National Biography 1931–40* (Oxford, 1949), pp. 715–16; M. Mansoor, *The Story of Irish Orientalism* (Dublin, 1944), pp. 44–6; R. Irwin, 'Saladin and the Third Crusade: A Case Study in Historiography and the Historical Novel', in *Companion to Historiography*, ed. Michael Bentley (London, 1997), pp. 144–5.

true as well as a romantic hero'.[37] The emphasis on Saladin's chivalry owed much to Sir Walter Scott's novel, *The Talisman* (1825), but supported now by copious references to Arabic sources.

In the twentieth century, publications and editions of Arabic texts with a bearing on the crusades have become a flood. There has also been a more discriminating approach in determining which Arabic sources on the crusades should be given priority for translation. Claude Cahen did more than anyone else in this area.[38] Saladin ceased to be treated as primarily a paladin of chivalric romance.[39] Nikita Elisséeff and Carol Hillenbrand have redirected our attention to the role of the Atabaks who came before Saladin. Emanuel Sivan's remarkable and densely referenced and researched *L'Islam et la Croisade* (Paris, 1968) is a rare example of a monograph that seeks to look at the crusades from the Muslim point of view. All the same, there is a considerable amount of ground that still has to be made up. In the 1930s the great Orientalist and authority on the career of Saladin, Sir Hamilton Gibb, wrote as follows: 'Whereas the study of the Western and Greek sources has progressed to a point at which it may be said little more remains to be done, research on the Oriental sources is incredibly backward'.[40] Of course, Gibb's view of the state of the art in the study of the western sources was over-sanguine and important work in this field has since been published by Jonathan Riley-Smith, Giles Constable, Hans Eberhard Mayer, Ruth Morgan, Peter Edbury, Susan Edgington and many others. However, Gibb's judgement of the relative backwardness of the oriental side of the field holds as true in the twenty-first century as it did in the previous one. Far too few Arabic (and Persian and Turkish) sources have been brought into play. Few sources have been looked at except the obvious chronicles and biographical dictionaries. On the whole, the chronicles have been used merely to provide information to confirm or supplement the western materials. There has been little attempt to, as it were, get inside those sources and recreate the *Einfühlung* of the Muslim counter-crusade.

[37] Lane-Poole, *Saladin*, p. 401.

[38] *La Syrie du Nord à l'Epoque des Croisades* (Paris, 1940) was perhaps his masterpiece. On him, see M. Cahen, 'L'Historien et le politique: Engagement, pensée scientifique chez Claude Cahen', in *Itinéraires de l'Orient*, ed. R. Curiel and R. Gyselen (Bures-sur-Yvette, 1994) (= *Res Orientales* 6), pp. 385–442.

[39] See for example, A. S. Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, N.Y., 1972); H. Möhring, *Saladin und der Dritte Kreuzzug* (Frankfurt, 1979); M. C. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982).

[40] 'Notes on the Arabic Materials for the History of the Early Crusades', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 7 (1933–5), 739; quoted by D. Little, 'The Fall of "Akka" in 690/1291: the Muslim Version', in *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honour of Professor David Ayalon*, ed. M. Sharon (Leiden, 1987), p. 159.

On the other hand, an overemphasis on the crusades and their consequences has arguably distorted the history of the medieval Middle East. The Orientalists' preoccupation with the impact of the crusades on the Islamic lands has been so overwhelming that it is almost as if Muslim Syria and Egypt with all their inhabitants were periodically hung up in a wardrobe until the crusaders next needed to fight in those places again. We shall not fully understand the successes and failures of the crusaders until they are studied in a much wider Islamic context.

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XVIII

TRIBAL FEUDING AND MAMLUK FACTIONS IN MEDIEVAL SYRIA

According to Ibn Khaldūn's quasi-philosophical treatise on history, the *Muqaddima*: "it is easy to establish a dynasty in lands that are free from group feeling. Government there will be a tranquil affair, because seditions and rebellions are few, and the dynasty there does not need much group feeling (*'aṣabiyya*). This is the case in contemporary Egypt and Syria. They are [now] free from tribes and group feelings; indeed one would never suspect that Syria had once been a mine of them, as we have [just] stated. Royal authority in Egypt is most peaceful and firmly rooted, because Egypt has few . . . tribal groups . . ."[1] Ernest Gellner, in an attempt to explain how it was that the Mamluks and Ottomans were exceptional in Ibn Khaldūn's more general scheme of things (in which Muslim government normally depends upon the support of a tribal army and of Muslim clerics), quoted Ibn Khaldūn's affirmation of Egypt's and Syria's tranquil, non-tribal condition.[2]

However, Gellner, and Ibn Khaldūn before him, may have been trying to find an explanation for an anomaly that was not there, for there are limits, as we shall see, to the reliability of the historian who has been described as 'Islam's greatest sociologist' and Ibn Khaldūn's evocation of tranquil lands untroubled by tribal strife is not supported by the contemporary historical record. Although he wrote the main draft of the *Muqaddima* in what is now western Algeria in 779/1377, it is clear that he continued to add to it and revise it in Egypt and he was still working on the text as late as 804/1401–2.[3] Ibn Khaldūn arrived in Egypt in 1382 and died there in 1406. In 1400–1 he spent four months in Syria. He should therefore have been aware that what he had written about the absence of tribal

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[1] Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, F. Rosenthal, ed. and tr., 2nd edn., London, 1967, i, 334.

[2] E. Gellner *Muslim Society*, Cambridge, 1981, 74.

[3] F. Rosenthal, introduction to the *Muqaddima*, i, cvi–cvii.

group feelings in these lands was not true. The falsehood seems rather to have been an aspect of a more generalised desire to flatter his Mamluk hosts, for he was also fulsome in his praise of Cairo and of the Mamluk system.[4] In fact, Ibn Khaldūn's sojourn in the Mamluk lands coincided with famine, three plague epidemics, a foreign invasion (by Timur), and, as we shall see, prolonged factional fighting in which feuding tribal groupings played a crucial role. Moreover, as far as Upper Egypt was concerned, Arab tribesmen, rather than Mamluks, controlled the region. Ibn Khaldūn was in Egypt during the first reign of the Circassian Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (784/1382–791/1389), the second reign of the puppet Qalāwūnid Sultan Ḥajjī II (791/1389–792/1390), the second reign of Barqūq (792/1390–801/1399) and the first reign of Barqūq's son al-Nāṣir Faraj (801/1399–808/1405). Not one of these rulers was ever securely in control of his Sultanate.

Although Ibn Khaldūn's originality and intelligence as a theorist are inspiring, he seems less satisfactory as a workaday chronicler of events in his own time. Contemporary European travellers in Egypt presented a much bleaker picture of the situation in the Mamluk Sultanate in the late fourteenth century and the opening years of the fifteenth century. The Florentine pilgrim Frescobaldi who was in Egypt in 1384 described the Bedouin as exacting taxes on the towns, "like the [condottieri] companies" in Italy (effectively collecting protection money then).[5] As we shall see below, Bertrando de Mignanelli, a resident of Damascus, provides a lot of information about the role of Syrian Arabs fighting against Barqūq. He also waxed eloquent about how much Syria had suffered from the civil war that was a consequence of Barqūq's struggle to take power once more after his escape from Karak in 791/1389. The Cretan, Emmanuel Piloti, writing *c.* 1420, as well as describing Faraj's difficulties in retaining his throne, also stressed the power of the Arabs in Egypt and their contempt for the Mamluks. They frequently revolted against the Sultan and Mamluk punitive expeditions were only occasionally

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[4] For praise of Cairo, see W.J. Fischel, *Ibn Khaldun in Egypt: His Public Functions and His Historical Research (1382–1406)*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967, 18–19. For praise of the Mamluk system see Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, Cairo, 1867, v, 369–372; cf. D. Ayalon, 'Mamlūkiyyāt' (B), *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 2, 1980, 340–349.

[5] Lionardo di Nicolo Frescobaldi, *Visit to the Holy Places*, B. Bagatti, ed. and tr., Jerusalem, 1948, 56.

effective against them. Alexandria in particular was at the mercy of the Arabs because of their control of the supply routes to the city.[6] When he compared the incessant feuding at all levels of society to the long-running struggle of Guelfs and Ghibellines, Piloti was perhaps thinking of the centuries old feud between tribes claiming descent from Qays and Yaman: "Et pourtant les trois generations desucdites [i.e. Arabs, bedouin, and purchased slaves] sont toujours en division comme nous disons ghelfes et ghebellins".[7]

When Ibn Khaldūn wrote of Syria as having "once" been "a mine" of tribal and group feelings, it is obvious that he was referring to Umayyad times and the politico-military feuding between Arab tribes who belonged to the factions of Qays and Yaman. There is no need here to dwell on the semi-legendary origins and early history of Qays-Yaman feuding. There is an extensive scholarly literature on the origins of the Qays and Yaman moieties and on the role of Qays and Yaman tribal alignments in Umayyad politics.[8] There was a long-standing belief among the Arabs that they descended from two ancestors. The quasi-fictitious genealogy by which every Arab tribesman was assigned a North Arabian (Qaysī) or a South Arabian (Yamanī, or Kalbī) origin was of no great political or military importance until Umayyad times, when it provided a kind of theoretical underpinning to tribal struggle for power in Syria. It seems that, to a large degree, the Umayyad caliphs ruled by distributing patronage between the two rival factions. The political importance of the moieties declined sharply after the downfall of the Umayyad caliphs and the removal of the centre of government from Syria to Iraq. However, in the centuries that followed, Qays versus Yaman alignments continued to provide an organising principle for all sorts of feuds within or between tribes, clans and neighbourhoods, not just in Syria, but more generally throughout the Arab world. Indeed, rivalry between Qays and Yaman persisted into the twentieth century. It was not necessary to be a nomadic Arab in order to belong

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[6] E. Piloti, *Traité . . . sur le Passage en Terre Sainte*, Louvain, 1958, P.-H. Dopp, ed., 56–59.

[7] Piloti, *Traité*, 33.

[8] See for example, J. Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich und sein Sturz*, Berlin, 1902; *EI*[2], s.v. 'Ḳays-'Aylān' (W.M. Watt); M.A. Shaban, *Islamic History, a New Interpretation*, i, Cambridge, 1971, 120–123; P. Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, Cambridge, 1980, 34–35, 42–45; R. Patai, *Golden River to Golden Road*, 3rd edition, Philadelphia, 1969, 183–184.

to one or other of the moieties. Settled clans within towns and villages often declared for Qays or Yaman. It was not even necessary to be an Arab and, for example, there were Qaysī and Yamanī factions among the Kurds and Berbers. The entirely notional lineages of Qays and Yaman provided a social map of whom it was appropriate to raid and feud with. In general, "the-enemy-of-my-enemy-is-my-friend" principle applied. Qaysīs carried red banners, while the Yamanī colour was white.

Although Qays-Yaman feuding in the Umayyad period has attracted much discussion, as has, to a lesser extent, the persistence of the feud in the Ottoman period, the importance of Qays and Yaman loyalties in the Mamluk period has been largely neglected. The Mamluk period was notoriously a period in which succession to the Sultanate (and other matters) was settled by factional warfare. However, Arabic historians writing in the Mamluk period usually tend to give the impression that this factional strife took place more or less between members of the military elite—that is to say, between Turkish or Circassian emirs and *mamlūk*s. Modern historians have tended to follow their lead and discuss Mamluk strife in these terms. (I have been guilty of doing so myself.)[9] Often this may be correct and there were many occasions when the Mamluk elite sorted out its differences without recourse to the assistance of tribesmen or of urban mobs. As Arnold von Harff, who visited Egypt at the end of the fifteenth century, wrote of the Mamluk factional strife in Cairo at that time, "the war did not concern the country, nor the country war, only the Mamlukes fought between themselves and those of their party".[10]

However, there were occasions, as we shall see, when non-*mamlūk*s joined in the factional fighting of the Mamluk elite and, when they did so, they tended to describe themselves as Qaysīs or Yamanīs. Not only did nomadic Arabs align themselves in this manner, but non-nomadic Arabs and even non-Arab tribes and groupings also tended to describe themselves as belonging to these ancient factions. In times of Mamluk weakness and prolonged civil war the *ʿurbān* and the *ʿushrān* played a particularly important part in the strife. It is

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[9] R. Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382*, Beckenham, Kent, 1986; Irwin, 'Factions in Medieval Egypt', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1986, 228–246.

[10] Arnold von Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff*, Malcolm Letts, tr., Hakluyt Society, second series, xciv, London, 1946, 104.

necessary to clarify what is meant by those two terms. In the Mamluk period, *ʿarab*, plural *ʿurbān*, tended to be used to describe the fully nomadic Arabs of the desert. Prominent tribes included the Banū Muhanna' of Faḍl, the paramount tribe in the Syrian desert to the north and west of Damascus. In Upper Egypt, the Banū Hilāl were similarly dominant.

The meaning of *ʿashīr*, or *ʿushrān* (both forms are plural), is more problematic. Etienne Quatremère was the first to address the problem. In a note to his translation of Maqrīzī's *Kītāb al-Sulūk*, he stated that *ʿashīr* was used to refer to members of a tribe in general, and of an Arab tribe *par excellence*. He cited Maqrīzī to the effect that the *ʿashīr* of Syria are divided into the two groups, Qays and Yaman. He also cited Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir's life of Qalāwūn, (the *Tashrīf*, f. 54), to the effect that the hillsmen (*jabaliyyūn*) of Syria are known as *al-ʿashīr* and he noted that Ibn Wāṣil used *ʿashīr* to refer also to Kurds.[11] However, when Quatremère returned to the question later in his annotations to the *Kītāb al-Sulūk*, he tentatively identified the *ʿushrān* as Druzes.[12] According to A.N. Poliak, *ʿashīr* and *ʿushrān* were used to designate the great agricultural tribes of Syria.[13] Elsewhere, Poliak (who so often got things wrong), had suggested that "Qays-Yaman rivalry existed under the Mamluks only among the peasants, whereas the nomads were considered as Yamanīs".[14] According to William Popper, it refers mainly to "clansmen" living in the highlands of Ṣafad, Wādī al-Taim and the South Lebanon mountains and valleys, and he noted that their clans sometimes divided on Qays and Kalb lines. Some historians, including Popper, have also thought that the term refers mainly or exclusively to the Druze (and Popper surely was right to note that Mamluk historians never refer to members of Druze clans as Druzes).[15] However, this would not cover the frequent references to *ʿushrān* in Palestine, as far south as Gaza. For example, in 680/1281–82, early on in the Sultanate of al-Manṣūr

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[11] E. Quatremère, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Égypte*, Paris, 1845, i, pt. 1, 186–187, n. 65.

[12] Quatremère, *Histoire*, ii, pt. 2, 273–274.

[13] A.N. Poliak, 'Les révoltes populaires en Égypte à l'époque des Mameloukes et leurs causes économiques', *Revue des Études Islamiques*, 8, 1934, 264.

[14] A.N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the Lebanon, 1250–1900*, London, 1939, 63n.

[15] W. Popper, *Egypt and Syria under the Circassian Sultans; 1382–1468 AD: Systematic Notes to Ibn Taghrībirdī's Chronicles of Egypt*, Berkeley, 1957, University of California Publications in Semitic Philology, xvi, 16–17.

Qalāwūn, the local *ʿushrān* rebelled and plundered Gaza, and a little later Nablus was similarly plundered by *ʿushrān*.[16] In general *ʿashīr* and *ʿushrān* seem to have been used to describe semi-nomadic or sedentarised tribal groups, in contradistinction to more purely nomadic tribes, such as the Banū Faḍl.

During the Mamluk period, two developments may have contributed to the growth of tribal power and tribalist sentiment in both the countryside and the towns. First, as far as the countryside is concerned, Jean-Claude Garcin has suggested that as the Sultanate became more dependent on the spice trade for its revenues, so also it became more vulnerable to demands for protection money from the Bedouin tribes who dominated the overland routes for the spice trade and for goods coming in from Sudan.[17] In the early fourteenth century, Bertrando de Mignanelli (on whom more shortly) remarked that Nuʿayr, the Emir of the dominant tribe in the Syrian desert, used to receive "a large stipend from the Sultan to keep the desert safe, on account of the traders who brought spices to Damascus and from whom Nuʿayr demanded large tributes".[18] Ibn Khaldūn also reported that the Faḍl tribe received *iqṭāʿ*s and was given leadership over all the nomadic Arabs in return for protecting the caravans that travelled between Syria and Iraq.[19]

Second, as far as the towns were concerned, it seems that in the later years of the Mamluk Sultanate, particularly after the onset of the Black Death in 748/1347, there was a flight from agricultural hinterland into the cities. The depredations of the increasingly powerful Bedouin, as well as the exactions of Mamluk *muqṭāʿ*s, encouraged the migration of settled nomads and peasants into the cities.

The Mamluk Sultans had to put down several Arab revolts in the thirteenth and early fourteenth century (and, for example, the Bedouin attack on Gaza and Nablus in 680/1281–82 has already been mentioned).[20] Qays-Yaman feuding does not seem to have been an impor-

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[16] Ibn al-Furāt, *Tārīkh al-duwal wa al-mulūk*, vii, Beirut, 1942, 212, 225–226.

[17] J.-C. Garcin, 'Note sur les rapports entre bédouins et fellahs à l'époque Mamluke', *Annales Islamologiques*, 14, 1978, 153.

[18] W.J. Fischel, '*Ascensus Baroch*, A Latin Biography of the Mamluk Sultan Barqūq of Egypt (D. 1399) Written by Bertrando de Mignanelli in 1416', *Arabica*, 6, 1959, 153.

[19] Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibar*, vi, 6.

[20] On conflicts between Mamluks and Arabs, see Poliak, 'Les révoltes populaires', 251–273; J.-C. Garcin, *Un centre Musulman de la Haute-Egypte Médiévale: Qus*, Paris, 1976.

tant factor in the tribal disturbances in the early Mamluk period, nor do Arab tribesmen seem to have played a significant role in Mamluk factional strife. However, the perception that tribes and Qays-Yaman loyalties only become important in the last decades of the fourteenth century may be an optical illusion and possibly the product of the fact that Egyptian court historians, like Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, or Syrian religious scholars, like al-Yūnīnī, had little knowledge of or interest in Arab tribal affairs. If, however, one wishes to study the part played by Arab and other tribes in the Mamluk factional strife and particularly the fighting that took place in Syria in the 1390s, then one finds oneself exceptionally well served by historians based in Syria who reported on the prolonged civil war in great detail. Three sources in particular deserve mention here.

Little is known about Ibn Ṣaṣrā, except that he appears to have belonged to a scholarly family and that he lived in Damascus in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. So he was an eyewitness to the events he reported on in such detail in his local chronicle, *al-Durra al-mudī'a fī al-dawla al-Ẓahiriyya*. The chronicle is unusual in that it is peppered with improving anecdotes, moral fables and proverbs. Faced with recounting the calamities that befell Damascus in the 1390s, Ibn Ṣaṣrā seems to have found it easy to digress. The surviving manuscript of his chronicle runs from 786 to 799 (1384–99).[21] More is known about Taqī al-Dīn b. Qāḍī Shuhba (779/1377–851/1448), as his student al-Sakhāwī wrote a detailed biography of him. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba belonged to a distinguished family of religious scholars in Damascus. He taught in various *madrasa*s and rose eventually to become chief *qāḍī*. His chronicle (to which he does not seem to have given a title) covers, among other things, the war in Syria between Barqūq and Minṭāsh in immense detail.[22]

The third source was also a resident of Damascus and an eyewitness of many of the events he reported on. Bertrando de Mignanelli was born in Siena in 1370, but spent much of his adult life as a merchant trading in Damascus. On his return to Italy in 1416, he produced a Latin life of Barqūq, as well as a life of Timur, that actually concentrated heavily on Timur's invasion of Syria in 1400–01.

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[21] Muḥammad b. Muḥammad ibn Ṣaṣrā, *A Chronicle of Damascus 1389–1397*, W. Brinner, ed. and tr., Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963, 2 vols.

[22] *Tārīkh Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba*, i, Damascus, 1977; cf. *EI*², s.v. 'Ibn Ḳāḍī Shuhba' (J. Schacht).

Bertrando de Mignanelli's knowledge of Arabic coupled with his outsider's perspective makes him an exceptionally valuable source. He knew personally both the Sultan Barqūq and the Sultan's great enemy, the Arab Emir Nu'ayr.[23]

The ups and downs of the factional strife that was such a salient part of Barqūq's attempt to take control of the Sultan and the attempts of others to prevent him can be briefly summarised here. In 784/1382 the Circassian Mamluk Emir Barqūq usurped the Sultanate, dethroning the Qalāwūnid Sultan al-Ṣāliḥ Ḥajjī in order to do so. In 789/1391 Minṭāsh, the governor of Malatya, rebelled against al-Ẓāhir Barqūq. Two years later Minṭāsh's revolt was joined by Yalbughā al-Nāṣirī, the *nā'ib* of Aleppo, as well as the Arab Emir Nu'ayr b. Hayyar b. Muhanna'. Minṭāsh and Yalbughā, having advanced on Cairo, put Ḥajjī II back on the throne (with the new regnal title, al-Manṣūr). The defeated Barqūq was sent to prison in Karak of Moab. At first Yalbughā and Minṭāsh shared power, but it was inevitable that they should fall out eventually and there was street fighting in Cairo that ended with the triumph of Minṭāsh (something of a populist demagogue) and the imprisonment of Yalbughā. Later that year Minṭāsh ordered the killing of Barqūq in prison, but locals set him free. Barqūq then managed to recruit a small army of supporters in the Karak. When he advanced against Damascus, Kamishbughā, the *nā'ib* of Aleppo declared for Barqūq and various other emirs and *mamlūk*s rallied to Barqūq's cause. Barqūq proceeded to besiege Damascus and then to defeat Minṭāsh at the Battle of Shaqḥab in Muḥarram 792/January 1390. In the course of this battle, Ḥajjī, Minṭāsh's puppet sultan was captured. Later in the year Barqūq returned to Cairo where he resumed the Sultanate. Minṭāsh meanwhile briefly occupied Damascus, before being driven out by his former ally Yalbughā al-Nāṣirī, whom Barqūq had released from prison. Minṭāsh continued to fight on in Syria until Ramaḍān 795/July 1393 when he was captured and executed.[24] The end of the civil war did not mean that Barqūq and his supporters could rest on their bloodily-won laurels. Syria remained a turbulent place

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[23] W.J. Fischel, '*Ascensus Baroch*', 57–74 and 152–172; Fischel, 'A New Latin Source on Tamerlane's Conquest of Damascus (1400/1401) (B. de Mignanelli's Vita Tamerlani 1416)', *Oriens* 9, 1956, 201–232.

[24] On these events, see *EI*², s.v. 'Barḳūḳ' (G. Wiet); P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517*, Harlow, Essex, 1986, 128–129.

and prone to tribal disturbances. In 795/1392–93 there was a revolt of the Bedouins of Jabal Druze and a little later the governor of Karak was killed by local Bedouin after he attempted to secure the return of stolen livestock.[25] Moreover, Nu'ayr, who was never more than temporarily and partially reconciled with Barqūq, outlived the Sultan and continued to give trouble to his successor until he was captured and executed in 809/1406.

If one reads Ibn Khaldūn's account of all this in his chronicle, the *'Ibar*, one gets the impression that the struggle between Barqūq and Minṭāsh in the early 1390s was almost exclusively an elite struggle fought out between members of the Mamluk military caste.[26] However, Ibn Khaldūn's account of these events, which is disappointingly narrowly focused and uninterpretative, is given the lie by the much fuller narratives of Ibn Ṣaṣrā, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and Bertrando de Mignanelli. What distinguished this conflict from most other Mamluk factional conflicts was the fact that both sides depended heavily on the support of tribes and neighbourhood urban factions. Barqūq was backed by the *'ushrān*, Turkomans and some Arab tribes, while Minṭāsh was similarly backed by Turkomans and *'ushrān*, but most importantly he was supported by Nu'ayr of Muhanna', which was the leading branch of the paramount Syrian tribe of Faḍl. The Faḍl were a south Arabian and therefore Yamanī tribe. The much smaller south Arabian tribe of Mirā, led by 'Anqa b. Shaṭī, also supported Minṭāsh.[27] In general, the Qaysīs declared for Barqūq, while the Yamanīs were behind Minṭāsh and his partners.[28]

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[25] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh*, 469, 478.

[26] Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibar*, v, 482–505.

[27] On the lineages of these tribes, see Popper, *Systematic Notes*, 88, 5–7.

[28] I.M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge, Mass., 1967, in discussing the fighting in Damascus, gets the matter confused. His description of the factional alignments starting on page 78 is in direct contradiction with that given on page 165. "Quarters of the city called Ḥārat al-Kilāb supported the Sultan while defenders of Minṭāsh were called Qays, names going back to the ancient struggles of Arabian bedouin confederations which had plagued the Umayyad dynasty in the first century of the Arab conquests and disrupted the history of Syria ever since." However, while it is true that inhabitants of the Ḥārat Kilāb supported Barqūq, the Banū Kilāb should not be confused with the Kalbī or Yamanī moiety, for the Banū Kilāb, were, as Brinner notes, "a tribe of North Arabs, related to Qays, therefore on the side of the Sultan" (Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 53n; cf. i, 74; ii, 49). Lapidus later implicitly corrected himself (*Muslim Cities*, 165) when he describes Barqūq as being supported by Qays and opposed by Kalb. But it should be noted that chroniclers in the Mamluk period tended to use the term 'Yaman', rather than 'Kalb'.

Bertrando de Mignanelli particularly stressed the political and military power of the paramount Emir, Nuʿayr, the chief of the Faḍl tribe. According to Bertrando, Nuʿayr was with Minṭāsh and Yalbughā a member of the triumvirate that overthrew Barqūq in 701/1389 and put Ḥajjī back on the throne. Bertrando knew Nuʿayr well. They first became acquainted when Nuʿayr ambushed a trading caravan of which Mignanelli was part.[29] According to Bertrando, "Nuʿayr was an active and influential noble and had a great reputation". His alliance with Minṭāsh was confirmed by Minṭāsh's marrying a daughter of Nuʿayr.[30] Finally, though, Minṭāsh and Nuʿayr fell out and in 795/1392–3 Nuʿayr betrayed Minṭāsh to Barqūq's *nāʾib* of Aleppo. Bertrando de Mignanelli reported that previously Nuʿayr and his tribe had been suffering economically because of their support of Minṭāsh's hopeless cause. After his betrayal of Minṭāsh, Nuʿayr continued to enjoy (if that is the word) a turbulent career which ended with his execution in 809/1406. According to al-Sakhāwī, the power of the Āl Muhanna' came to an end, with Nuʿayr's death.[31]

If Minṭāsh was supported by the big Yamanī Bedouin tribes of the Syrian desert, Barqūq recruited much of his forces from the *ʿushrān*. In the early stage of rebellion when in 791/1389 Yalbughā al-Nāṣirī advanced against Damascus, Barqūq's *nāʾib* there "paraded and inspected the *ʿashīr* al-Zabadānī whose *muqaddam* (chief) was Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla, and he inspected a section of the Qaysīs and they were *ʿashīr* of Wadi Barada and their *muqaddam* was Ibn Jāmūs".[32] It seems that, at this stage of the rebellion, the lines of conflict on Qays-Yaman partisanship had not yet been drawn up, for, though Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba does not make it explicit at this point, Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla's *ʿashīr* following was Yamanī and subsequently Ibn Hilāl

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[29] Fischel, *Ascensus*, 164.

[30] For Bertrando de Mignanelli's account of Nuʿayr's role in the revolt, see Fischel, *Ascensus*, 153–154, 160–165.

[31] Al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ*, Cairo, 1934–6, x, 203–204. Al-Sakhāwī, however, erroneously gives the year of his death as 808. Nuʿayr played such a leading role in these troubled decades, that it is not possible here to follow his career in detail. However, for a synoptic account of his career, see A.S. Tritton, 'The Tribes of Syria in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* x, 1948, 570–571, which seems to be largely based on the account given by Ibn Khaldūn in his chapter on the Arab tribes in Syria in the *ʿIbar*, vi, 6–12; cf. M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie à l'Époque des Mamelouks*, Paris, 1923, 190 and note.

[32] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Tārīkh*, 265.

al-Dawla went over to Minṭāsh. Ibn Ṣaṣrā reported how in subsequent fighting in Damascus in 792/1390, when Barqūq's forces were losing, "the Yamanīs, the tribesmen of Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla had their way with the Qaysī tribesmen", and the pious chronicler went on to lament the brutality with which the Yamanīs slaughtered the Qaysīs, though he added that he had been told by someone that the Qaysīs had only come to plunder Damascus.[33] According to Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba's obituary of Nāṣir al-Dīn b. 'Alā' al-Dīn Hilāl al-Dawla, under the year 794/1391–92, "when the civil war (*fitna*) broke out, he had to be against Barqūq because he was *muqaddam* of Yaman, whereas Barqūq had the support of Qays. So that obliged him to be on Minṭāsh's side".[34] Ibn Jāmūs, on the other hand, as a Qaysī remained loyal to Barqūq.[35]

Ibn al-Ḥanash was the most prominent of the leaders of the Qaysī *'ushrān*. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba identified him as *muqaddam* of the Qays in the Biqa'. He and his men played a leading part in besieging Minṭāshi Damascus and cutting off its water supply. He went on to capture and govern Baalbek on Barqūq's behalf, before being defeated in 792/1390 and crucified on the back of a camel with the head of one of his little sons hung round his neck. (The Yamanī leader, Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla, presided over his execution.)[36] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, in describing his execution, refers to Ibn al-Ḥanash as having been the 'imam' of his supporters, which may just possibly suggest that he was a Druze. After Ibn al-Ḥanash's execution, his oldest son, 'Alā' al-Dīn b. al-Ḥanash, took over the leadership of the Qaysīs of the Biqa'.[37]

Although Minṭāsh had the support of Nu'ayr and most of the nomadic Arabs, Barqūq also had some support from the *'urbān*. After Barqūq had been helped to escape from Karak, much of the core of his initial support came from Arabs of the Karak region, most notably from the Banū 'Aqaba Arabs led by Ibn Khāṭir.[38] The greater

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[33] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 113; ii, 80–81.

[34] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 452–453.

[35] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 333.

[36] On the short and bloody career of Ibn al-Ḥanash, see Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 16, 44, 82–83; ii, 7, 28, 57–58; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 300, 303, 326, 329–330.

[37] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 112, 122, 127; ii, 80, 89, 93; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 374, 376, 410, 419.

[38] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 289; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, Cairo, 1929–56, v, 474.

part of the army Barqūq then brought to face the Minṭāshi forces at Shaqḥab consisted of peasants and Arabs.[39] Although tribal partisanship for Barqūq and Minṭāsh was in large measure dictated by traditional Qays-Yaman alignments, this was not absolute and, for example, the Bánū Ḥāritha, a tribe of south Arabian descent, declared for Barqūq.[40] Moreover, it was often possible to find a cousin or member of a cadet branch of a clan who could be sponsored against a hostile tribal emir. For example, Barqūq attempted to sponsor cousins of Nu'ayr's to replace him as leader of the Faḍl confederacy.[41] Similarly, Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla, a leader of Yamanī *'ashīr*, was said to have been murdered by a cousin who sent the head on to Damascus.[42] There are numerous references to Turkomans fighting on both sides, though at first Minṭāsh seems to have had a larger following of Turkomans, having presumably recruited these troops when he was first in revolt in the Malatya region.

Most citizens of Damascus supported Minṭāsh until it was obvious that his cause was lost. In large part, their antipathy to Barqūq seems to have been due to the looting and disorderly behaviour of Barqūq's Ẓāhirī *mamlūk*s when they lodged in Damascus on their way to confront Yalbughā al-Nāṣirī in 791/1389.[43] Ibn Ṣaṣrā indicates that Barqūq was generally unpopular with the citizens of Damascus—and for that matter with Ibn Ṣaṣrā himself.[44] Bertrando de Mignanelli also states that most of the citizens of Damascus were partisans of Minṭāsh, as Barqūq advanced against Damascus, "a city that had done him much harm in the past". The Damascans called the Sultan "the cow thief".[45] It is a fair guess that much of Barqūq's support at this time came from tribesmen and peasants of the hinterland who hoped to profit from the sack of Damascus. However, not all of the city was opposed to Barqūq and he was supported by the inhabitants of Ḥārat al-Kilāb.[46] On the other hand, most of the cit-

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[39] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 42; ii, 27.
[40] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 92 and note; ii, 64.
[41] Fischel, *Ascensus*, 165; Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 180–181; ii, 135; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, v, 548; al-Sakhāwī, *Dāw'*, x, 203–204.
[42] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 453.
[43] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, i, 17–18; ii, 8; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, v, 399–400.
[44] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Chronicle*, v, 45–6; ii, 28–29.
[45] Fischel, *Ascensus*, 155.
[46] See note 28 above.

izens of Aleppo seem to have supported Barqūq, with the exception of the poor suburb of Bānaqūsā which was Miṇṭāshi.[47]

The motives of the most of the tribesmen and 'civilians' who participated in the civil strife, or *fitna*, of the 1390s remain unclear. It seems likely that declarations of loyalty to Qays or to Yaman sometimes concealed mercenary motives and the *'urbān* and *'ushrān* must often have been fighting for pay, or at least in the expectation of plunder. (Press-gangs may also have had a role.) However, the chronicles shy away from mentioning mercenary details. More generally references to Qays-Yaman feuding in chronicles of the Mamluk period, though quite frequent, are sporadic and it is impossible to get any systematic picture of the moieties or to establish their continuity over any length of time. The troubles of the 790s/1390s appear exceptional in that, in this period, one finds leading *mamlūk*s fighting at the heads of large Syrian tribal followings. However, it has already been indicated that the period is also exceptional in that it was written about by three contemporary historians who were based in Syria and who covered local events in great detail. It would be unwise to conclude from the silence of other chroniclers in other decades that Qays-Yaman alignments did not have a role in what at first sight seem to be disputes solely within the Mamluk elite. For example, Ibn Taghrībirdī's chronicle, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, is in many ways an excellent source on the troubles of the 790s/1390s, for the chronicler's father, the Emir Taghrībirdī, fought on Barqūq's side in the war, and the *Nujūm* provides an immense amount of detail about events in Egypt and more generally about the fortunes and misfortunes of individual emirs and *mamlūk*s. However, he is less well informed about events in Syria and places much less emphasis on the role of citizens and tribesmen in the wars. Moreover, if one only had the evidence provided by Ibn Taghrībirdī (and other Egyptian historians like him), one could not guess that Qays-Yaman rivalry played any part in those wars, for he never mentions the two moieties in his annals of the period.[48]

The Syrian military reservoir was not just drawn upon in years of internal strife. Non-Mamluk Syrians, mostly mounted Arabs from the desert and infantry archers from the Biqa' and Palestine, furnished

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[47] Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, *Ta'rīkh*, 341; cf. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities*, 89, 166–167.
[48] The civil wars of the time are covered in *Nujūm*, v, 388–551 *passim*.

a large part of the forces that were deployed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries against Timur, the Aqqoyonlu and the Ottomans. The army of Egypt in the Mamluk period has been the subject of systematic study.[49] However, the Syrian army and the ways it was recruited, equipped and paid have yet to receive the attention they deserve.

A minor puzzle relating to the Qays-Yaman struggles of the 1390s is that Barqūq, who placed himself at the head of the Qaysī faction, appears to have claimed South Arabian descent for himself, via some Ghassanids who had allegedly settled in Circassia in pre-Islamic times.[50]

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[49] D. Ayalon, 'Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental African Studies* 15, 1953, 203–228, 448–476; 16, 1954, 57–90.

[50] Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibar*, v, 472; cf. P.M. Holt, 'The Exalted Lineage of Ridwan Bey: Some Observations on a Seventeenth-Century Mamluk Genealogy', in *idem*, *Studies in the History of the Near East*, London, 1973, 220–230. Although Ibn Khaldūn was dubious about the Ghassanid origins of the Circassians, al-'Aynī, who later wrote about the lineages of the Circassian Mamluk Sultans, al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh and al-Ẓāhir Ṭāṭār, was more credulous: Al-'Aynī, *al-Sayf al-Muhannad*, Cairo, 1967, 27–29; al-'Aynī, *al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Ẓāhir*, Cairo, 1962, 5.

XIX

Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Khaldūn, Historians of the Unseen

According to Sir Lewis Namier, the great historian of Hanoverian England, "historians imagine the past and remember the future."[1] It is evident that Namier intended his paradoxical-seeming dictum to apply to all historians, but there are few, if any, of whom it is more true than of Ibn Khaldūn and his one-time student, al-Maqrīzī. In modern times Ibn Khaldūn has mostly been studied by historians, philosophers, and sociologists. None of those who have picked their way through his *Muqaddimah* seem to have engaged fully with the width and intensity of his interest in divination and the future. A remarkable amount of space in Ibn Khaldūn's philosophical prolegomena to the study of history is devoted to consideration of divination and the occult sciences more broadly. In general, he took a hard-headed, even hostile view of the occult sciences. Alchemy and astrology were, like philosophy *(falsafah)*, part of the *'ulūm al-awā'il* and, as such, inimical to true Islam.

Ibn Khaldūn judged alchemy to be a pernicious kind of sorcery, when it was not simply actual fraud.[2] *Maṭālib*, the occult science of treasure-hunting, was, like alchemy, not a natural way of making a living and the treasure-hunters were, like most of the alchemists, confidence-tricksters who used forged documents and other trumped-up pieces of evidence to prey upon the weak-minded. The section on *maṭālib* is entitled "Trying to make money from buried and other treasures is not a natural way of making a living."[3] A great deal of mumbo-jumbo was associated with treasure-hunting and, according to Ibn Khaldūn, this sort of thing was bound to appeal to the Egyptians, as they had a centuries-long attachment to anything to do with sorcery. One only had to look at the confrontation of Moses with the Egyptian sorcerers, as it was related in the Quran, to see that this was so.[4] Again the invocation of the Divine Names for magical purposes was wicked and blasphemous. Ibn Khaldūn was here denouncing the sort of magic set out in

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[1]Lewis Namier, *Conflicts: Studies in Contemporary History* (London, 1942), 70.

[2]Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, published by E. Quatremère as *Prolégomènes d'Ebn-Khaldoun*, Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale et autres bibliothèques, vols. 16–18 (Paris, 1858), 18:191–219; idem, *The Muqaddimah: an Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed. (New York and London, 1967), 3:227–46.

[3]Ibn Khaldūn, *Prolégomènes*, 17:280–87; idem, *Muqaddimah*, 2:319–26.

[4]*Prolégomènes*, 17:283; *Muqaddimah*, 2:322.

treatises like the thirteenth-century *Shams al-Ma'ārif,* attributed to al-Būnī (and popular among adherents of the Shadhilī Sufi *ṭarīqah* in Egypt).[5]

But Ibn Khaldūn's main interest was in those occult techniques that seemed to promise knowledge of the future. Here again his approach was hostile and suspicious. What he wanted to affirm was that knowledge of the future was reserved to God alone. However, his hostility to divination was tinged by ambivalence and he was not consistent in his approach to this subject. At times he seems to be saying that knowledge of the future is reserved to divinely guided prophets; at other times he seems to be saying that those who are not divinely guided prophets should not seek to enquire into the future—which is a rather different thing. Moreover, Ibn Khaldūn clearly viewed the subject as of remarkable importance, for he devoted one of the key prefatory discussions of the *Muqaddimah* (the sixth prologue) to an exploration of different ways of knowing the future, including such diverse topics as Prophetic revelation, Sufi meditation, numerology, astrology, and the *zā'irajah.*[6] As a Muslim, Ibn Khaldūn had to accept the authenticity of prophecy and, having done so, he found that the distinction between prophecy and divination was a subtle one. He was particularly interested in the political and historical uses to which divination might be put. Hence his discussion in the sixth prologue of *ḥisāb al-nīm.*[7] *Ḥisāb al-nīm* (it is not known why it was so called) was a kind of *jafr,* or a numerological divination based on the letters in the names of dynasties or rulers, that was used for making political and historical predictions. In medieval times it was widely thought that *ḥisāb al-nīm* had been vouched for by Aristotle in his famous treatise, the *Politics*. However, those who thought this were confusing the *Politics* with the *Sirr al-Asrār,* or *Secreta Secretorum,* an anonymous and immensely popular ragbag of wise maxims, stories, and spells. Ibn Khaldūn, after careful consideration, seems to have rejected the efficacy of *ḥisāb al-nīm,* though his rejection was tinged with ambiguity. The subject had after all attracted the attention of distinguished men. (He also doubted whether it was correct to attribute the *Sirr al-Asrār* to Aristotle.)[8]

When he came to consider such divinatory techniques as catoptromancy,

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[5]*Prolégomènes,* 18:145–46; *Muqaddimah,* 3:180–82.

[6]*Prolégomènes,* 16:165–220; *Muqaddimah,* 1:184–247; cf. Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldūn, an Essay in Reinterpretation* (London, 1982), 65–68.

[7]*Prolégomènes,* 16:209–13; *Muqaddimah,* 1:234–38.

[8]On the misattribution to Aristotle and Ibn Khaldūn's doubts, see *Muqaddimah,* 1:81–82, note; cf. Dorothee Metlitzki *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* (New Haven, 1977), 107. On Ibn Khaldūn's ambivalence with regard to the supernatural and miraculous in general, see Armand Abel, "La place des sciences occultes dans la décadence," in *Classicisme et déclin culturel dans l'histoire de l'Islam,* ed. Robert Brunschvig and G. E. von Grunebaum (Paris, 1957), 304–5; Toufic Fahd, *La divination arabe* (Paris, 1987), 45–50.

geomancy, and divination from entrails, he denied that there was any sound, logical basis for making predictions from these techniques. Nevertheless, he did suggest that such practices might permit their practitioners to allow their minds to drift and, if they were spiritually gifted, their souls might ascend into the realm of the spiritual.[9]

In a later section devoted to astrology, Ibn Khaldūn argued that the boasts of the astrologers were not justified by their results.[10] Another reason for disapproving of astrologers was that their predictions often focused on coming crises and in so doing were liable to provoke civil strife.[11] Yet, when he encountered Tīmūr in Damascus in 1401, he told the would-be world-conqueror that Maghribi soothsayers and saints had predicted his coming. More specifically in 766/1365, astrologers in the western Islamic lands, basing themselves on the impending astrological conjunction of the two highest planets, Saturn and Jupiter—an event that occurred only once every 960 years—had deduced the coming of Tīmūr in 784/1382. Prophecies about the political consequences of this planetary conjunction seem to have originated in Isma'ili circles in North Africa and were originally held to foretell the coming of a Fatimid Mahdi (a possibility that Ibn Khaldūn did not rule out). Only subsequently were the prophecies reapplied to fit the coming of Tīmūr.[12]

Moreover, to stick with Ibn Khaldūn's belief that the coming of Tīmūr had been foretold, in a lengthy chapter in the *Muqaddimah,* entitled "Forecasting the future of dynasties and nations, including a discussion of predictions *(malāḥim)* and exposition of the subject called divination *(jafr),*" he reproduced a lengthy, though fragmentary poem attributed to a Qalandar Sufi, al-Bājarbaqī (d. 724/1324).[13] Al-Bājarbaqī's poem (which will remind many Western readers of Nostradamus's *Centuries*) makes obscure prophecies about the future, the obscurity being enhanced by the frequent use of initials or gibberish assemblages of consonants to identify,

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[9]*Prolégomènes*, 16:209; *Muqaddimah*, 1:234.

[10]*Prolégomènes*, 18:220–28; *Muqaddimah*, 3:258–67.

[11]*Prolégomènes*, 18:225; *Muqaddimah*, 3:262–63.

[12]Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Ta'rīf bi-Ibn Khaldūn wa-Riḥlatihi Gharban wa-Sharqan*, ed. Muḥammad ibn Tāwīt al-Ṭanjī (Cairo, 1951), 412–13; idem, *Le voyage d'Occident et d'Orient: autobiographie*, trans. Abdesselam Cheddadi (Paris, 1980), 232–34; cf. Walter J. Fischel, ed. and tr., *Ibn Khaldūn and Tamerlane, Their Historic Meeting in Damascus, 1401 A.D. (803 A.H.): A Study Based on Arabic Manuscripts of Ibn Khaldūn's "Autobiography," with a Translation into English, and a Commentary* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952), 35–36, 79–81; idem, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt: His Public Functions and His Historical Research* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), 55–57; Yves Marquet, "Ibn Ḫaldûn et les conjunctions de Saturne et de Jupiter," *Studia Islamica* 65 (1987): 91–96; cf. Al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldūn*, 26.

[13]*Muqaddimah*, 2:.225–27, 229–31; *Prolégomènes*, 17:197–198, 200–1.

or perhaps rather to conceal the identity of people and things. One of the fragments runs as follows:

> This is the lamed Kalbite. Be concerned with him!
> In his time there will be disturbances, and what disturbances!
> From the East, the Turkish army will come . . .

And then the warning tails off into more obscure *jafr*. Presumably, the author of this verse was intending to refer to the limping Turk, Tīmūr, and that was how Ibn Khaldūn read it (though why Tīmūr should be associated with the South Arabian tribal grouping of Kalb is a bit of a mystery). Another of the fragments quoted by Ibn Khaldūn is also of interest:

> His father will come to him after an emigration
> And a long absence and a hard and filthy life.

This Ibn Khaldūn took to refer to the Sultan Barqūq and his summoning his father from Circassia to join him in Egypt.

One can, if one wishes, credit al-Bājarbaqī with remarkable powers of prescience, but, of course, it is more likely that the relevant verses were composed after the rise to power of both Tīmūr and Barqūq and falsely dated earlier, in order to confer more prestige on the prophetic verses as a whole. Ibn Khaldūn surmised that this was the case with the Bājarbaqī oeuvre—yet he remained fascinated by the subject and devoted an inordinate amount of space to it. Now Ibn Khaldūn only encountered al-Bājarbaqī's prophecies after he had arrived in the Mamluk lands in 1382. The bulk of the *Muqaddimah* was written in the late 1370s in Qal'at Ibn Salāmah in the Oranaise. However, it is important to bear in mind that he continued to expand and revise his work after his arrival in Mamluk Egypt and, as late as 1404, he was still revising his masterwork.[14] This raises the possibility that some of the historians who studied with Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt, such as al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar, may conceivably had some influence on the final shape of the *Muqaddimah*. However, intriguing though this notion may be, it will not be pursued further here.

Also while in Egypt, Ibn Khaldūn had heard from learned people of the book of predictions attributed to Ibn al-'Arabī al-Ḥātimī (not the famous Andalusian Sufi Ibn al-'Arabī), in which the author "speaks about the horoscope of the foundation of Cairo." If one followed Ibn al-'Arabī's somewhat complex calculations, then it

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[14]Franz Rosenthal, "Introduction," in *Muqaddimah*, civ–cvii.

could be deduced that Cairo would be destroyed in 832/1428–29.[15] Ibn Khaldūn relayed the prophecy without comment. However, the fact that this prophecy, like the Bājarbaqī prophecies, as well as another prophecy of Ibn al-'Arabī's concerning an eschatological redeemer of Fatimid descent, were circulating in Cairo in the 1390s suggests the doom-laden atmosphere in which Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī thought and wrote. *Malḥamāt,* prophecies concerning the last days and final slaughterings, preoccupied Ibn Khaldūn, just as they had an earlier scholar, Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī. (Ṣafadī wrote a treatise on the subject).

In the latter part of the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn included a section on *ta'bīr*, or dream interpretation.[16] Dream interpretation was not part of the dodgy corpus of the *'ulūm al-awā'il;* rather it "belongs to the sciences of the religious law."[17] It was clearly possible to divine the future in dreams, for Joseph in the Quran did so. Moreover, the Prophet had declared "A good dream is the forty-sixth part of prophecy." The problem for Ibn Khaldūn was how to distinguish a good dream from a false one, but at the end of his discussion, he concluded that "dream interpretation is a science resplendent with the light of prophecy."

The divination technique that above all others fascinated Ibn Khaldūn involved the use of a device called the *zā'irajah*. He discussed this thing at length in two places in the *Muqaddimah*. In the first place he discussed whether it could validly be used for telling the future. In the second place he went into enormous detail on the mechanics of the *zā'irajah*'s operation, including an operational manual cast in cryptic verse and attributed to al-Sabtī. The *zā'irajah* was a kind of calculating machine, relying on rotating, concentrating circles, marked with devices that combined *ḥurūf* and *jafr*. It bears a curious similarity to Ramon Lull's engine for demonstrating the existence of God and answering all questions, the Ars Magna. Ibn Khaldūn described the *zā'irajah* as "a remarkable technical procedure" and remarked that "Many distinguished people have shown interest in using it for supernatural information. . . ."[18] Despite his fascination with it, he suggested that the machine was incapable of determining the future by supernatural means. Rather the answers it produced were predetermined by the phrasing of the questions that were posed to it. Still Ibn Khaldūn remained fascinated by the device and went into extraordinary detail about its workings. He remonstrated with critics of

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[15]*Prolégomènes*, 17:196; *Muqaddimah*, 2:224.

[16]*Prolégomènes*, 18:80–86; *Muqaddimah*, 3:103–10.

[17]*Prolégomènes*, 18:80; *Muqaddimah*, 3:103.

[18]*Prolégomènes*, 16:213; *Muqaddimah*, 1:239; for the *zā'irajah* generally, see *Prolégomènes*, 16:213–20, 3:146–79; *Muqaddimah*, 1:238–45, 3:182–214; cf. D. M. Dunlop, *Arab Civilization to A.D. 1500* (London, 1971), 243–46; Fahd, *La divination*, 243–45.

the *zā'irajah* who denounced it as merely hocus-pocus.[19] It also seems, though he expresses himself somewhat obscurely on the topic, he believed that people with mystical training could use the device as a kind of springboard for veridical divination.[20] Through this strange science secrets could indeed be uncovered, though he believed that it would be impious to seek to divine the future through this technique. It also seems that Ibn Khaldūn may have been even more obsessed with the device than he let on in the *Muqaddimah*. Ibn Ḥajar, in his obituary of Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Marrākushī (d. 735), described how this man was obsessed with the *zā'irajah* and how he left his *zā'irajah* to Ibn Khaldūn, who continued to research the topic intensively, though he kept his findings to himself.[21] A North African treatise on the *zā'irajah* quoted an eyewitness to Ibn Khaldūn in 1371 testing the device by asking it how old this particular technique of divination was. The *zā'irajah*'s response was that it was invented by Idrīs (i.e., Hermes) and since then its mystery had ascended to the highest rank. When Ibn Khaldūn got this answer, he was so pleased and excited that he spun and danced on the terrace of his house.[23] It is easy to exaggerate the modernity of Ibn Khaldūn by discounting his flirtations with the supernatural, as well as his intense, though rather conventional piety.

Neither Ibn Khaldūn's knowledge of the past history of the Maghrib and al-Andalus, nor his study of what was to come inspired him with optimism. Referring to the ravages of the Black Death, he wrote that it "was as if the voice of existence in the world had called out for oblivion and restriction, and the world responded to its call. God inherits the earth and whomever is upon it."[23] Ancient ruins testified that a large area of North Africa had once been settled and prosperous, though this was no longer so. Civilization in the region had shrunk: "This fact is attested by relics of civilization there, such as monuments, architectural sculpture, and the visible remains of villages and hamlets."[24] The ruins and abandoned cities of Yemen, Iraq, and Syria similarly testified to the decay of the world. One of the main aims of the *Muqaddimah*—arguably its chief aim—was to explain why there

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[19]*Prolégomènes*, 16:217–18; *Muqaddimah*, 1:243–44.

[20]*Prolégomènes*, 16:217; *Muqaddimah*, 1:243.

[21]Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4 vols. (Hyderabad, 1929–32), 3:376–77. (Note that the man in question is not the famous Andalusian statesman and polygraph, Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb.)

[22]M. Reinaud, "Divination et Histoire Nord-Africaine au temps d'Ibn Khaldun," *Hesperis* 30 (1943): 215.

[23]*Prolégomènes*, 16:52; *Muqaddimah*, 1:64.

[24]*Prolégomènes*, 16:272–73; *Muqaddimah*, 1:304–5.

were more ruins in North Africa and the Islamic world generally than there were settled habitations.

The Arab race had long ago exhausted itself, and with the exhaustion of the Berbers would come the extinction of Maghribi civilization.[25] Ibn Khaldūn believed that power was moving from the Andalusian clime to the north. As Aziz Al-Azmeh has noted, "Ibn Khaldūn seems . . . to have had a strong sense that momentous developments were taking place in the North [i.e., in Christian Europe], and surmised that the centre of gravity of human habitation was moving northwards—for which there were (according to him) ample stellar causes, as well as mundane ones he could not quite grasp. The passage is difficult to interpret, as the allusion in it might equally have been to the growing power of the Ottomans, to which there are other vague references in the *Muqaddimah*."[26]

All of the above serves as a rather lengthy introduction to certain aspects of the historical thinking of al-Maqrīzī. Al-Maqrīzī knew Ibn Khaldūn and he appears to have read at least some of the *Muqaddimah*, but how much did al-Maqrīzī learn from this? Although the only subject that we know al-Maqrīzī formally studied with Ibn Khaldūn was *mīqāt*, the science of time measurement (which was used both for religious and for astrological purposes), it is perfectly clear that al-Maqrīzī was familiar with Ibn Khaldūn's ideas about history. He gave Ibn Khaldūn a fairly lengthy entry in his biographical dictionary, the *Durar al-'Uqūd*, in which he was unstinting in his praise of Ibn Khaldūn's mastery of historiography and most specifically enthusiastic about the *Muqaddimah*.[27] Among other praiseworthy features, "it reveals the truth of things, events, and news; it explains all the state of the universe and reveals the origin of all beings in an admirable plain style." Moreover, at several points in the *Durar*, al-Maqrīzī borrowed from Ibn Khaldūn.[28] Ibn Ḥajar and al-Sakhāwī later quoted al-Maqrīzī on the incomparability of the *Muqaddimah*, though they both had doubts whether the

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[25]On this aspect of Ibn Khaldūn's pessimism, see Abdallah Laroui, *L'histoire du Maghreb: un essai de synthèse* (Paris, 1976), 1:202–3.

[26]Aziz Al-Azmeh, "Mortal Enemies, Invisible Neighbours: Northerners in Andalusi Eyes," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Leiden, 1992), 269. Azmeh is discussing a passage that does not appear in the standard edited text of the *Muqaddimah*. For this text see M'barek Redjala, "Un texte inédit de la Muqaddima," *Arabica* 22 (1975): 321–22; see also *Prolégomènes*, 2:245–46; *Muqaddimah*, 2:281–82 on the greater wealth of Christian merchants and Eastern merchants and how this is attested to by astrology.

[27]Maḥmūd al-Jalīlī, "Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīdah fī Tarājim al-A'yān al-Mufīdah lil-Maqrīzī," *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī* 13 (1966): 235.

[28]Nasser O. Rabbat, "Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*, an Egyptian *Lieu de Mémoire*," in *The Cairo Heritage: Essays in Honor of Laila Ali Ibrahim*, ed. Doris Behrens-Abouseif (Cairo, 2000), 24.

book really was as good as al-Maqrīzī cracked it up to be.[29] (Incidentally, composition of *Durar al-'Uqūd* seems to have had a melancholy inspiration, for as al-Maqrīzī noted in the introduction, "By the time I was fifty most of my friends and acquaintances had perished. . . .") Ibn Ḥajar sardonically observed that al-Maqrīzī was only so enthusiastic about Ibn Khaldūn because he had not understood him properly. Although al-Maqrīzī was unstinting in his praise of Ibn Khaldūn, the casually arrogant immigrant genius from the Maghrib never troubled to mention the latter at all—neither in the *Muqaddimah*, nor in the *Ta'rīf*.

It is perfectly plausible that al-Maqrīzī learned important lessons from the older historian, but, of course, what modern thinkers, like Arnold Toynbee, Ernest Gellner, and others, have admired in Ibn Khaldūn and taken away from a reading of the *Muqaddimah* may not be the same as what al-Maqrīzī may have learned from his acquaintanceship with the man and the work. Indeed, al-Maqrīzī in the fifteenth century seems to have read a rather different book from the one we read today. But first I would like to draw attention to some obvious contrasts between the two historians. Although the *Muqaddimah* concentrated on broad historical developments and their underlying social and economic causes, when Ibn Khaldūn actually came to write history in the *'Ibar* and, more briefly and scrappily, in the *Ta'rīf*, the results, as many have noted, are disappointing. Ibn Khaldūn mostly wrote a thoroughly conventional narrative history. By contrast, al-Maqrīzī was actually the more theoretical when it came to writing history as opposed to theorizing about it. He did give weight to broad social and economic causes. It is only disappointing that his economic information was so often erroneous and his social analyses skewed by a religious and moralistic perspective.

Secondly, if, as we have seen, Ibn Khaldūn was a rather gloomy historian, al-Maqrīzī was even gloomier. Though Ibn Khaldūn was gloomy about the Maghrib and about the End of the World in general, he actually took a thoroughly upbeat view of life in Cairo, on the peaceful nature of existence in Mamluk Egypt and Syria, and of the dynamic and Islamic virtues of the Mamluks themselves. Ibn Khaldūn presented an essentially false picture of life in Egypt as prosperous and peaceful and free from tribal disputes.[30] In Ibn Khaldūn's eyes, the Mamluks were benign patrons of scholarship and architecture and, above all, they were the saviours of Islam. For al-Maqrīzī, on the other hand, they were "more lustful than monkeys,

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[29]Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1968), 498; cf. M. A. Enan, *Ibn Khaldūn, His Life and Work* (New Delhi, 1979), 98–99.

[30]On Ibn Khaldūn's (unduly rosy) picture of the Mamluk sultanate, see Robert Irwin, "Rural Feuding and Mamluk Faction Fighting in Medieval Egypt and Syria," to be published in *Texts, Documents and Artifacts: Islamic Studies in Honour of D. S. Richards*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (forthcoming 2002). See also Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt*, 78–79, on Ibn Khaldūn's neglect of the great famine in Egypt.

more ravenous than rats, more harmful than wolves."[31]

Al-Maqrīzī, by contrast preferred to harp on all the disasters that had recently befallen Egypt—most of which, according to the *Ighāthah,* had been caused by the ruling regime's mismanagement and corruption.[32] Notoriously, al-Maqrīzī was nostalgic about the glory days of the Fatimids. He also painted for himself an unduly positive assessment of the condition of Egypt and Syria under the early Bahri Mamluk sultans. Historical nostalgia mingled with personal nostalgia—nostalgia for the time before he lost his only daughter, for the time when he enjoyed the favor of the sultan Barqūq to such an extent that one of his contemporaries described him as the sultan's *nadīm,* for the time when most of his friends were still alive, for the time when one could still buy the sweets he particularly liked in the Cairo market. The flipside of al-Maqrīzī's pervasive nostalgia was, as we shall see, his apprehension about the future.

Thirdly, if al-Maqrīzī was gloomier than Ibn Khaldūn, he was also much loonier—and he was totally uncritical in his embrace of the occult and the prophetic. Al-'Aynī in his brief obituary of al-Maqrīzī accused him of being obsessed with history, yes, but also of being obsessed with *darb al-ramal,* or geomancy.[33] According to al-Sakhāwī, al-Maqrīzī cast Ibn Khaldūn's horoscope and, on the basis of this, predicted that the latter would hold high office. Al-Sakhāwī described al-Maqrīzī as an expert on *zā'irajah,* the astrolabe, geomancy, and *mīqāt* (time-keeping).[34] Al-Maqrīzī was also convinced of the predictive power of dreams. Towards the end of the reign of al-Ashraf Sha'bān an acquaintance of al-Maqrīzī's dreamt of Barqūq as an ape preaching from a *minbar* and unsuccessfully trying to lead the people in prayer. From this he deduced that the dream had predicted the rise of Barqūq, as the Circassian sultan had the qualities of an ape—niggardliness and corruption. Ibn Taghrībirdī thought al-Maqrīzī's interpretation of this quite ridiculous.[35] Incidentally, Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Maqrīzī's student, fan, and historiographical rival, had no time for astrology at all and in the *Nujūm* he repeatedly went out of his way to highlight the failed predictions of the *munajjim.*

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[31]Nasser O. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo: A New Interpretation of Royal Mamluk Architecture* (Leiden, 1995), 293–94 and note.

[32]Adel Allouche, *Mamluk Economics: A Study and Translation of al-Maqrīzī's* Ighāthah (Salt Lake City, 1994).

[33]Badr al-Dīn al-'Aynī, *'Iqd al-Jumān fī Tārīkh Ahl al-Zamān,* ed. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṭanṭāwī al-Qarmūṭ (Cairo, 1985), 2:574.

[34]Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi',* 12 vols. (Cairo, 1934–36), 2:24.

[35]Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah,* 12 vols. (Cairo, 1929–56), 5:423–24.

He believed that astrology, like the other *'ulūm al-awā'il*, was doomed to disappear.[36] Moreover, to return to dreams, the narrative of al-Maqrīzī's chronicle, the *Sulūk*, is peppered with accounts of political dreams that came true.[37]

In the *Khiṭaṭ*, al-Maqrīzī wrote that, since the Egyptian people were governed by Gemini, they were especially gifted in predicting the future. He instanced the time when in 791 Barqūq escaped from prison in Kerak in Transjordan and people in the Bayn al-Qasrayn in Cairo knew that very day.[38] It is natural that the *Khiṭaṭ* should have been read primarily as a source on the topography of Cairo and on the history of the Fatimids and Mamluks. However, to do this runs the risk of neglecting entire sections of the *Khiṭaṭ* that offer the modern reader no useful historical information (at least not useful in terms of mainstream historiography). But it is noteworthy that, after some preliminary pious throat-clearing, the *Khiṭaṭ* actually opens with a substantial disquisition on astrology. According to al-Maqrīzī, a grasp of this subject is necessary if the reader is to follow what he is to going to write about later. The familiar great names in Islamic astrology, Abū Ma'shar, al-Bīrūnī, and so on are cited, but al-Maqrīzī's interest was not merely theoretical and, for example, in order to predict the annual rise of the Nile flood, al-Maqrīzī followed a technique set forth by al-Bīrūnī, a method which involved a board and lots of seeds.[39] Most important, al-Maqrīzī believed that the fate of Egypt was foretold in the doom-saying of astrologers—as we shall see.

Al-Maqrīzī's gloomy ponderings on the future of Egypt arose naturally from his imagining of what Egypt's past had been. He knew—or thought he knew—that Egypt had once been a land of fabulous wealth, or rather it had several times been a land of fabulous wealth.[40] First, there had been the wealth of the Pharaohs, both before and after the Flood. Then there was the wealth of Egypt under its Rumi (Greek and Roman) rulers. Then, there was the well-attested wealth of the Fatimid caliphs. It even seemed to al-Maqrīzī that in the early Mamluk period Egypt had been more prosperous than it now was. So the question naturally arose, if, in former times, Egypt had been so very wealthy, where had all that treasure gone? Barqūq's Cairo was after all a dump in al-Maqrīzī's eyes. Ibn Khaldūn, in his

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[36]See for examples ibid., 7:220, and note; 7:789–90.

[37]On the literary uses of dreams in chronicles of the Mamluk era written by al-Maqrīzī and others, see Barbara Langer, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Volkskunde Ägyptens nach mamlukischen Quellen* (Berlin, 1983), 70–85.

[38]Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Mawā'iẓ wa-al-I'tibār (al-Khiṭaṭ)*, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1853–54), 1:86–87.

[39]Ibid, 1:8–14.

[40]Though the theme is pervasive throughout the *Khiṭaṭ*, al-Maqrīzī devoted a short section specifically to the destruction of the wealth of Egypt (*Khiṭaṭ*, 1:73–74), which contains some characteristically eccentric speculations about fossilized watermelons, cucumbers, and other fruits.

discussion of treasure-hunting, had asked himself precisely the same question. What had happened to the great wealth of past cultures? The sensible answer, as far as Ibn Khaldūn was concerned, was that those riches had been transferred elsewhere to other more successful cultures. Ancient Egypt's wealth had been plundered, first by the Persians and then by the Greeks.[41] Al-Maqrīzī, who was never so fond of sensible answers, took a somewhat different view.

In his chapter on the *maṭālib* in the *Khiṭaṭ,* al-Maqrīzī wrote about *The Book of Treasures,* or *'Ilm al-Kunūz:* "It is said that the Greeks [i.e., Byzantines] in leaving Egypt and Syria hid most of their treasures, but they wrote down in books where they had hidden those treasures and these books were deposited in a church in Constantinople."[42] Alternatively, according to al-Maqrīzī, the Greeks took older treasure books (presumably dating from Pharaonic times) to the church in Constantinople. Each servant of the church who guarded those valuable texts received one page of where to find treasure as his reward. Ibn Khaldūn took the more sensible view that no one who was hiding treasure would then set about writing out instructions that others could use to find that treasure.[43] However, it was obvious to al-Maqrīzī at least that most of the treasures of antiquity had been hidden here and there all over Egypt. It is worth remembering that he lived in an age of thesaurisation, when viziers and other state functionaries routinely salted away the proceeds of office-holding in hollow columns, hidden cupboards, and holes beneath their courtyards.[44] Al-Maqrīzī actually devoted a whole treatise to hidden treasures, the *Kitāb al-Dhakhā'ir,* which has not survived. However, he also discussed the subject in the *Khiṭaṭ* and he relayed stories that are found in Ibn Waṣīf Shāh, al-Mas'ūdī and al-Murtaḍá, about the treasure-hunting *muṭālibūn,* who ventured into the pyramids and other places.

The pyramids were not merely storehouses of material treasure—of gold, silver, and jewels, but they were also repositories of intellectual treasures. Al-Maqrīzī shared the widely held view that the pyramids were a sort of collection of educational time- capsules that had been built to preserve ancient Egypt's intellectual heritage from a predicted catastrophe (the theme of ecpyrosis). Egypt had once been home to Hermes, or Idrīs, and he taught all the sciences to the inhabitants of the land before the Flood.

According to Ibn Waṣīf Shāh (fl. ca. 1000), the author of a widely credited but quite fantastic history of ancient Egypt, King Surīd had a dream which his counsellors

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[41] *Prolégomènes,* 17:285–86; *Muqaddimah,* 2:324–25.

[42] Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ,* 1:71. The section on *maṭālib:* 70–73.

[43] *Prolégomènes,* 17:285; *Muqaddimah,* 2:324.

[44] A *makhba'* was a place in the house designed for the hiding of treasure. See E. W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians,* 3rd ed. (London, 1896), 16.

interpreted as a warning of coming catastrophe. Unable to determine whether it would be by fire or by water, they built the pyramids to preserve within them their wisdom in a picture language that people in future centuries would be able to decode and they also drew diagrams on the walls of their temples. Al-Maqrīzī related a series of tales, also found in al-Mas'ūdī, al-Idrīsī, and others, about those who ventured into the pyramids looking for treasure or excitement. Most of these tales had a moralizing burden.[45] One story must have been particularly dear to the author of *Shudhūr al-'Uqūd*. It was related that treasure hunters excavating in the area of the pyramids presented Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn with a jar of ancient pure gold dinars in one of the pyramids and the inscription on the dinars declared in the ancient *barbatī* script "He who has been able to issue pure currency will be pure in this life and the next."[46]

The Sphinx was the talismanic guardian that saved Giza from being engulfed by sands. Another factor behind al-Maqrīzī's engagement with the occult was his fierce patriotism. He wanted to boast about his land and, in order to do so, he invoked it's *'ajā'ib*, its marvellous temples, talismans, wonder-working pillars, and buried treasures.

Some of the messages that the ancients had transmitted across the centuries were warnings for al-Maqrīzī and his contemporaries. According to al-Maqrīzī, there was once a temple in Ikhmīm, now lost, with pictures and images that recorded the past and future of the world. He was steeped in the writings of the eighth-century Sufi Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī—or at least the writings ascribed to him, for much or all of the occult material is presumably pseudepigrapha. According to al-Maqrīzī, Dhū al-Nūn had succeeded in deciphering a Pharaonic inscription in a temple, presumably in Ikhmīm. The inscription warned its readers, "Beware of freed slaves, young men, military men become slaves, and Nabataeans who claim that they are Arabs."[47] (So it would seem that ancient sages had foretold the coming of the Mamluks.)

More conclusively for the pious Muslim, Egypt's sad fate had been foretold in Prophetic hadiths. Egypt was safe only as long as Iraq was unscathed, according to several hadiths, but according to another hadith, there would come a time when Egypt would be ruined by the overflowing of the Nile and military revolts would break out. According to yet another hadith, Egypt and Basra would become the most desolate of places. Red fighting and dry hunger would ruin Egypt and the

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[45]For al-Maqrīzī on pyramids, see *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:199–216 and cf. 1:53. See also Erich Graefe, ed. and tr., *Das Pyramidenkapitel in al-Makrizi's "Hitat" nach zwei Berliner unde zwei Münchener Handschriften* (Leipzig, 1911).

[46]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:73.

[47]Ibid, 1:69.

Nile would dry up. More puzzlingly it had also been foretold that "when men with yellow flags shall enter Egypt the Syrians shall dig roads under the ground." The "men with yellow flags" might well be the armies of the Ayyubids or Mamluks (for yellow was the color of their standards), but what is supposed to be going to happen in Syria? Again Egypt should beware when it should be the target of the fourfold blows of the Andalusians, Abyssinians, Turks, and Rumis.[48] And so on... and al-Maqrīzī proceeded from these and numerous other doom-laden prophecies to a description of the ruined situation of al-Fusṭāṭ in his own time.[49]

In the opening pages of the *Khiṭaṭ*, al-Maqrīzī declared that the purpose of the study of history was to warn people and prepare them for departure from mortal life. Also that history was the most important of the sciences "for it contains warnings and exhortations reminding man that he must quit this world for the next." Also, "through such study, a person whose blindness of heart and vision was removed by God, will learn about the destruction and final disgrace which fell to the lot of his fellow-men after the handling of wealth and power." And in a version of the text of the *Khiṭaṭ,* quoted in al-Sakhāwī's *I'lān*, al-Maqrīzī continued "and he will come to abstain from this world and to wish for the other world."[50] His gloomy animadversions on the decline of Egypt under al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn and his descendants and the slide to worse yet under the early Circassian sultans should be seen within the broader framework of his historical vision, which encompassed the pre-Adamite sultans, the antediluvian Pharaohs, the Deluge, and the rule of Rome. The *Khiṭaṭ* considers how many centuries have passed since the world was created and how few years yet it and Islam have to endure, before the coming of the Mahdi.[51] Ever since Silvestre de Sacy and his student, Quatremère, historians have stressed al-Maqrīzī's importance as a historian and it is certainly true that history was his chief interest. However, this stress has been at the expense of al-Maqrīzī's wider literary and intellectual interests. For, after all, he wrote poetry, as well as treatises on bees, on precious stones, on music, on dogmatics, on the domestic objects in the household of the Prophet, a life of Tamīm al-Dārī, a polemical attack on the followers of Ibn al-'Arabī in Damascus, a biographical dictionary of artists (*The Light of the Lamp and the Answer of Company in Respect of the Annals of Artists)*, as well as a treatise on secret letters and talismans.[52] All in all, he claimed to have written more than 200

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[48]Ibid, 2:124–26.

[49]Ibid, 2:126–34.

[50]Ibid, 1:3–4; Rosenthal, *History,* 315–16.

[51]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:440–53.

[52]Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden, 1949), 1:654. On the treatise on artists, see Thomas Arnold, *Painting in Islam* (Oxford, 1928) 22, 138.

works. History was at the core of his oeuvre, but occult and eschatological concerns were at the core of his history. It is difficult to be sure what Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī talked about when they met, but it is probable that they talked more about knowledge of the future than the past. If Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt succeeded in anything, it was in passing on his pessimism and his speculative interest in the future to al-Maqrīzī.

XX

GUNPOWDER AND FIREARMS IN THE MAMLUK SULTANATE RECONSIDERED

David Ayalon's *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Medieval Society* was published in London in 1956. The argument of this important book has been summarized by Reuven Amitai as follows: "A more direct reason for the demise of the Mamluk Sultanate is the failure of the mamluks to adopt the use of firearms; thus they were not able to meet the challenge of both the Ottoman Empire and the Christian West. This inability to modernize the army was rooted in the social psychology of the mamluks. The adoption of firearms contradicted their training and vocation as mounted archers, as the use of primitive handguns required dismounting; this would have meant the transformation of the mamluks into infantrymen . . . it made inevitable the defeat of the mamluks by the Ottomans at Marj Dābiq in 1516 and their conquest of Egypt and Syria".[1] *Gunpowder and Firearms* in the Mamluk Kingdom presented a Toynbean model of the collapse of an empire, as the Mamluk Sultanate was presented with a challenge—new military technology—to which it failed to respond. In this failure to adapt, the Mamluks differed from the Ottomans and from the various European nations. *Mutatis mutandis*, Ayalon had offered a Middle Eastern version of the line taken in J.F.C. Fuller's *The Decisive Battles of the Western World* where, according to Fuller, "Gunpowder blasted the feudal strongholds and ideals of their owners. By changing the character of war, gunpowder changed the medieval way of life".[2]

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[1] Reuven Amitai, "The Rise and Fall of the Mamluk Institution; A Survey of David Ayalon's Works" in M. Sharon (ed.), *Studies Islamic History and Civilization in honour of David Ayalon*, (Jerusalem, 1986), 28.

[2] J.F.C. Fuller, *The Decisive Battles of the Western World 480 B.C.–1757* (London, revised ed. 1970), 323.

Ayalon's book has had a remarkable influence on other historians, among them Mamlukists like M. Holt and Carl Petry, and, outside the obsessively narrow field of Mamluk studies, also on such important figures as the historian of the Islamicate world, Marshall Hodgson, and on the wide-ranging military historian, John Keegan. That it should have had such an influence is hardly surprising. It was written by the leading historian in the field. Ayalon's establishment of the chronology of the introduction of *Gunpowder and Firearms* into the Sultanate was based on an extensive reading of the sources. He had a discriminating approach to the problems of terminology and translation, as well as a properly cautious attitude regarding the dating of technological firsts. On many key issues in chronology and terminology, it is most unlikely that Ayalon's monograph will ever be superseded.

However, there are grounds for unease with the more general portrait of the mamluks as an arrogant and obsolete military caste who were incapable of appreciating the usefulness of the cannon and musket (as it were the dinosaurs of the late medieval Levant.) First, if the Mamluk elite was indeed hostile to firearms, then this was an unusual attitude for a medieval military elite to take. In the medieval West, finely worked guns were produced specially for princes. Guns were christened in churches. Nobles and knights competed for the office of Master of the Ordnance. Fifteenth- century noblemen put guns on their blazons. Anthony the Great Bastard of Burgundy, one of the greatest jousters of the fifteenth century, chose a wooden barbican with gun ports as his emblem and Louis of Bruges chose a bombard as his blazon. Cannonades featured in the chivalric romance of Amadis de Gaule.[3] The Earl of Warwick lost the second Battle of St Albans in 1461 because of his enthusiastic over-reliance on guns and other bits and bobs of military gadgetry. The guns with their fixed emplacements fatally reduced the mobility of the Earl's forces and the gunners were overrun before they could fire their pieces off.[4] (I will return to the Battle of St Albans later.) The point is that in late medieval Christendom, the deployment of cannons and musketry were considered of as being an extension of chivalry rather than as its antithesis.

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[3] Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven and London, 1984), 241–42; MalcolmVale, *War and Chivalry*, (London, 1981), 155.

[4] John Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society*, (London, 1981), 171.

Again, in sixteenth-century Japan, the Samurai, elite horse-archers, were similarly enthusiastic. "Within months of the first guns being brought into Japan they were being copied and mass produced for the daimyo armies".[5] In China, the Ming were making use of artillery from the fifteenth century onwards.[6] Even in desolate, backward and impoverished Circassia with its illiterate kleptocracy, or robber-aristocracy, the noblemen rode about with guns slung over their back.[7] It is worth noting here that the Mamluk elite in the late Middle Ages were mostly recruited from the Circassians of the Caucasus. But it is perhaps also worth noting that Germans and Hungarians were also prominently represented in the ranks of the mamluks and such renegades or captured soldiers were also likely to be already familiar with firearms.[8]

Muslim regimes in the Near East and North Africa were not slow to adopt firearms. Indeed they may have been ahead of Europe in doing so. The first reference to cannon being used in Europe is in Florence in 1326. By the 1340s references to the deployment of cannons become common. The first unambiguous reference to the English using cannon is at Crecy in 1346. The earliest reference to European use of handguns is 1346. A fourteenth-century Swedish handgun still survives. By 1411 the matchlock was in use. However, the handguns of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were not of the sort that could be fired from the saddle. That sort of firearm only became available in the sixteenth century.[9]

According to Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, a fourteenth-century courtier and historian in the service of Granada, the Nāṣirid prince

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[5] Stephen Turnbull, *The Book of the Samurai: The Warrior Class of Japan* (London, 1989), 78.

[6] On the Chinese development of gunpowder technology, see Joseph Needham's classic work, *Science and Civilization in China*, vol. V, *Chemistry and Chemical Technology Part 7: Military Technology: The Gunpowder Epic* (Cambridge, 1986).

[7] Georgio Interiano, (1502) cited in Shauket Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors in Circassian History* (Beirut, 1972), 79.

[8] On Europeans in Mamluk service, see, for examples, Jacques Heers and Georgette de Groer (eds. and trs.), *Itinéraire d'Anselme d'Adorne en Terre Sainte (1470–1)*, (Paris, 1978), 199. Jacques Masson (ed. and tr.), *Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri, 1483* (Paris, 1975), vol. II, 431–4.

[9] On the early history of firearms in the West, see Claude Blair, *Pollard's History of Firearms* (Feltham, Middlesex, 1983), 25–61; O.F.G. Hogg, *English Artillery 1326–1716* (London, 1963), 10–49; William McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force and Society since A.D. 1000* (Chicago, 1982), 81–8.

Abū Walīd Ismā'īl I used cannon at the siege of Huesca in 1324.[10] Because of the overlapping use of the Arabic term naft to refer to both naphtha, or Greek fire, and to gunpowder, it is difficult to determine when precisely gunpowder was first used in warfare in the Mamluk sultanate. Ayalon argued that naphtha, or *naft*, ceased to used by the Mamluks in either battles or siege warfare at around the end of the Crusading period. The very word *naft* fell out of use for about a century or a century and a half. When the word did come back into circulation, it no longer meant naphtha, but rather referred to gunpowder. Therefore in the fifteenth century *naft* effectively means *bārūd*.[11] Professor J.R. Partington in his *History of Greek Fire and Gunpowder* (1960) doubted this. Ayalon replied that "*naft* cannot be the same as naptha, for the simple reason that in spite of its being used in fighting many hundreds of times, it never causes fire, it is never aimed at inflammable targets and none of the normal measures of protection work against it".[12]

But the matter is not so clear-cut. In 1400, when Tīmūr deployed a siege tower against the Damascus citadel, the garrison hurled *naft* at it and the tower burned down.[13] Also in factional fighting in Damascus in 1412, both sides were using arrows and naphtha, which set shops on fire. 14 Again in 1439 in a naval skirmish in the Delta a Mamluk boat was set on fire by "*midfa' naft*", they shot it but the fire blew back, burning some of the supplies and injuring some of the crew.[15] The conclusion seems inescapable. Greek fire was being used as late as the early decades of the fifteenth century.

The Burgundian traveller, Bertandon de la Brocquière, makes it clear beyond any shadow of doubt that in the 1430s the Mamluks and their subjects were still accustomed to deploy both cannons and naphtha-throwers. Bertrandon's sojourn in Beirut coincided with a Muslim festival, during which the garrison of the citadel fired off their cannons. At the same time "the people launched into the air,

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[10] I.S. Allouche, "Un texte relatif aux premiers canons", *Hesperis*, vol. XXXII (1945), 81–84.

[11] Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 9–21.

[12] Ayalon, "A Reply to Professor J.R. Partington", *Arabica*, vol. X, (1963), 72.

[13] Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa'l-Qāhira*, W. Popper ed., (Berkeley, 1926–29), vol. VI, 65; cf. 54.

[14] *Ibid.*, vol. VI, 266.

[15] Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kītāb al-Sulūk*, M.M. Ziyāda, ed. (Cairo, 1934–58), vol. IV, 1165; Ibn Taghrībirdī, Nujūm, vol. VII, 106.

very high and to a great distance, a kind of fire larger than the greatest lantern I ever saw lighted. They told me they sometimes made use of such at sea, to set fire to the sails of an enemy's vessel". Bertrandon spent a ducat on acquiring recipe and he returned to France with the recipe, the ingredients and even the wooden moulds.[16] However, it is necessary to note that Ayalon was in general right to suggest that in the fifteenth century naft normally refers to gunpowder and Partington was wrong to doubt this.

Setting the *naft* problem aside, there are ambiguous references in Mamluk sources to the use of *makāḥil* (maybe handguns) and *madaāfiʿ* (maybe cannons) in the 1340s and 50s. In an untranslatable passage in al-ʿUmarī's chancery manual, *al-Taʿrīf bi'l-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf*, there is a reference to *makāḥil al-bārūd* (guns using gunpowder). (Al-ʿUmarī died in 1349.)[17] There are numerous and unequivocal references to Mamluk use of cannons from the 1360s onwards (which is earlier than we have evidence for Ottoman Turkish use of cannons). It is again difficult to be precise about the date of the introduction of the handgun into the Mamluk Sultanate, because of the looseness of usage of terms used to refer to firearms. For a long time *madāfiʿ* and *makāḥil* were used indiscriminately in the sources to refer to both cannons and handguns. For example when Ibn Taghribirdi discussed the fighting in Cairo between the Sultan Jaqmaq and rebellious mamluks in 854/1450, in the *Nujūm* he referred to Jaqmaq's warden of the armoury setting up *madāfiʿ* on the towers of the Citadel. However when Ibn Taghribirdi wrote up the same incident in the *Ḥawādith*, he reported that *makāḥil* were set up on the citadel.[18] Also, *bunduqiyya*, which in the early Mamluk period referred to the crossbow, in the later Mamluk period came to mean arquebus.[19]

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[16] "The Travels of Bertrandon de la Brocquière A.D. 1432, 1433", in Thomas Wright (ed. and trans.), *Early Travels in Palestine* (London, 1848), 296. Clearly it is not true as Guilmartin has claimed, that the secret of Greek fire was lost with the sack of Constantinople in 1204. (John Francis Guilmartin Jr, *Gunpowder and Galleys: Changing technology and Mediterranean warfare at sea in the sixteenth century* (Cambridge, 1974), 60 and n).

[17] Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Al-Taʿrīf fī al-Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, (Cairo, 1894), 208; cf. Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 5n. and 41–42n.

[18] Ibn Taghribirdi, *Nujūm*, vol. VII, 192; *idem*, *History of Egypt, 1382–1469 A.D.*, (William Popper, tr.) University of California Publications in Semitic Philology (Berkeley, California, 1960), vol. XIX, 129 and note.

[19] The use of *bunduqiyya* to mean both crossbow and arquebus has led to occasion confusions in modern scholarshi In "The Problem of the *Bidaʿ* in the Light of

However, the Leningrad *furūsiyya* manuscript, entitled *Collection Concerning the Various Branches of the Art*, which is a late fifteenth-century (1474) copy of an early fourteenth-century manuscript, describes what is unambiguously a handgun, calls it a *midfaʿ* and has a picture of it.[20] Ayalon claims that the first unambiguous reference to use of the handgun in the Mamluk Sultanate dates from 1490. This was when Qāytbāy offered members of the *ḥalqa* extra pay if they managed to learn to handle the arquebus.[21] However, I have found an earlier reference, albeit a trivial one. In 1424 a Circassian mamluk captured in the raid on Cyprus turned out to be a considerable acrobat and marksman. He entertained Barsbāy's Cairo with displays of a *mukḥala* and a bow while walking a tightrope.[22] Moreover, Western sources, which Ayalon did not use, suggest that the Mamluks were using handguns well before 1490. For example, Bertrandon de la Brocquière, who was in Mamluk Syria in the years 1432–3, noted how the pilgrim caravan returning from Damascus was provided with an escort some of whom carried "small harquebuses which they fired off every now and then".[23] Jacques Couer was accused by his enemies in 1451 of having supplied guns to the Mamluk sultan Barsbāy.[24] According to the traveller, Joos van Ghistele, Ferdinand of Naples sent the Sultan Qāytbāy a shipload of weapons including culverins, arabesques, serpentines and other firearms in 1482 and the Sultan was delighted by the gift. The following year, 1483, the

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an Arabic Manuscript of the 14th century", in *JESHO*, vol. VII (1964), 191–96, Subhi Y. Labib erroneously deduced from certain passages in al-Turkomani's treatise on *bidaʿ* (1397) that the *shuṭṭār*, raffish huntsmen who specialised in targeting certain birds, were using arquebuses to do so. However, it is perfectly clear from the context that they were using crossbows. Al-Buduqiyya is also the Arabic for 'Venice' and this may have led the sixteenth-century historical romancer, Ibn Zunbul, to deduce erroneously that the gun was a Venetian invention. Aḥmad b. Zunbul al-Maḥallī, *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk: wāqiʿat al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī maʿa Salīm al-ʿUthmānī*, A.T. ʿĀmir, ed. (Cairo, 1962), 58–59.

[20] Leningrad, Institute of Asian Peoples Arabic MS C686. On the manuscript, see J.R. Partington, *A History of Greek Fire and Gunpowder* (Cambridge, 1960), 204–7; A. Rahman Zaki, "Gunpowder and Arab Firearms in the Middle Ages", *Gladius* (1967), 49–50; Needham, *Science and Civilization*, vol. V, pt. 7, 43–44.

[21] Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 59.

[22] Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī b. Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr bi-abnāʾ al-ʿumr*, Ḥasan Ḥabashī, ed. (Cairo, 1969), vol. II, 348; cf. ʿAlī ibn Dāwud al-Jawharī, *Nuzhat al-nufūs wa'l-abdān fī tawārīkh al-zamān*, Ḥasan Ḥabashī, ed. (Cairo, 1974), vol. III, 73.

[23] Bertrandon de la Brocquière, 301.

[24] Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), 349.

pilgrim Felix Fabri in Egypt was escorted by an arquebus-bearing mamluk.[25]

However, it is, of course, useful to distinguish between the introduction of a weapon and the first instances of its effective deployment in a battle or a siege. When are guns used to do more than frighten the horses? In the West, cannons were used for siege warfare as early as the late fourteenth century.[26] But cannons on the battlefield were hardly more than noise-making machines until the mid-fifteenth century. It is true that artillery did play a crucial part at the Battle of Castillon in 1453, but the guns in question were not field guns, but siege guns in deeply entrenched positions deployed against densely packed infantry.[27] By common consent, the Battles of Ravenna (1512) and Marignano (1515) were the first European battles to be won by field artillery.[28] As for the handgun, the Swiss made effective use of them in the 1430s, as did the Hussites a decade or so earlier. Even so, the Italian wars of 1494–1559 were still largely fought by heavy cavalry with lances, even though the Spanish army in Italy had some arquebusiers.[29] Arquebuses only replaced the crossbow in France in 1567.[30] English armies were similarly slow to switch to the handgun.

Turning now to the Middle East, it is a mistake to think that it lagged behind Europe in the deployment of firearms in the battlefield. More or less contemporaneously with Marignano and Ravenna, artillery was playing some part in the battles of Chaldiran (1514), Marj Dābiq (1516) and Raydāniyya (1517). Moreover, somewhat earlier, Ottoman cannons and arquebuses seem to have played a decisive role in Mehmed II's victory over Ūzūn Ḥasan and the Āqqūyūnlū at the Battle of Bashkent in 1473.[31]

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[25] Rene Bauwens-Praux (ed. and tr.), *Voyage en Egypte de Joos van Ghistele 1482–1483* (Paris, 1976), 40–41: Jacques Masson (ed. and tr.), *Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri, 1483* (Paris, 1975), vol. III, 918.

[26] Goodman, *Wars of the Roses*, 164.

[27] Ross, Wars of the Roses, 112.

[28] Carlo M. Cipolla, *Guns and Sails in the Early Phase of European Expansion 1400–1700* (London, 1965), 28.

[29] Vale, *War and Chivalry*, 70.

[30] Vale, *War and Chivalry*, 136.

[31] John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu, Clan, Confederation, Empire: A Study in 15th/9th Century Turko-Iranian Politics* (Minneapolis, 1973), 132–4; Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, Ralph Manheim tr., William C. Hickman ed. (Princeton, 1978), 315.

The Mamluk sultanate made significant use of handguns from the late fifteenth-century onwards and it was ahead of the Ottomans and Safavids in doing so. Qāytbāy had the *awlād al-nās* trained to fire *bunduq al-raṣāṣ*. (*Raṣāṣ* means lead or bullet. According to Ayalon, *bunduq al-raṣāṣ* can refer to both the arquebus and its ammunition.)[32] The musketeers received extra pay and were equipped with camels and were sent off to fight the Ottomans in 895/1490).[33] It was a remarkably successful campaign. The mamluks reached Kayseri and sacked its suburbs and the following year Bayezid II sued for peace. It has been suggested that it was Ottoman defeats in this war that persuaded Bayezid II to reform his army and equip it with firearms.[34] The earliest references to Ottoman troops having handguns dates from 1465. Spandugino, writing in 1510, says that the Janissaries had only recently learned the use of handguns.[35] Venetian consular reports of the Ottoman struggle against the Safavid Shah Ismāʿīl in the opening decades of the sixteenth century make it clear that only a minority, albeit a large minority, of the Janissaries were *schiopeteri* (marksmen). At that stage most Janissaries still carried bows and the maritime historian, John Guilmartin, is of the opinion that most of the Janissaries who fought at Lepanto (1571) were still bowmen.[36]

It is true Middle Eastern generals were slow to equip their infantry with handguns. However, there may have been good reasons for this. The handgun in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries offered very few advantages over the composite recurved bow used by the mamluks and the Janissaries.[37] The composite recurved bow, com-

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[32] Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 59.

[33] Ibn Iyas, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr*, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā ed. (Cairo and Wiesbaden 1960–63), vol. III, 269; Ayalon, *Gunpowder*, 59, 63–64, 67; Shai Har-El, *Struggle for Domination in the Middle East: The Ottoman-Mamluk War, 1485–91* (Leiden, 1995), 201–2.

[34] Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: the Classical Age 1300–1600* (London, 1973), 31, 33.

[35] Paul Wittek, "The Earliest References to the Use of Firearms by the Ottomans", Appendix II in Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 143; cf. R.C. Jennings, "Firearms, Bandits and Gun Control", *Archivium Ottomanicum*, vol. VI (1980), 339.

[36] Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleons*, 251.

[37] On the composite recurved bow, see. J.D. Latham and W.F. Patterson, *Saracen Archery* (London, 1970), *passim*; Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleons*, 149–55; Aḥmad Y. Al-Ḥassan and Donald R. Hill, *Islamic Technology: An illustrated history*, (Cambridge, 1986), 98–9; Ulrich Haarmann, "The late triumph of the Persian bow: critical voices on the Mamluk monopoly on weaponry" in Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarman (eds.), *The Mamluks in Egyptian politics and society* (Cambridge, 1998), 174–87.

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posed of layers of horn and sinew and a little over three feet long, was more accurate and had a longer range than the sixteenth-century handgun. An arrow, fired from such a bow, could hit a target 500 yards away. That arrow could pierce plate armour at fifty yards. In the hands of a trained archer a composite recurved bow fired six shots a minute (as against the one or two shots a minute that a man with a matchlock might manage). Unlike the early matchlocks, the recurved bow could be managed from the horse. A study of the seventeenth-century wars between the Tartars and the Poles and the Russians has shown that even at so late a date and after the adoption of the musket, the horse-archer still usually had the advantage of infantry using firearms. The bows of the Tartar cavalry had a longer range and fired faster than the Russian muskets and, of course, the horse archer had the additional advantage of mobility.[38]

The chief disadvantage of the composite recurved bow was that it was difficult to handle and it had a heavy drawing weight—heavier even than that of the famous English longbow. It took years to train the men who used these bows and it was expensive to maintain such a skilled force.[39] However, if one did actually possess such a skilled force, as the Mamluk sultans did, then plainly it would have been a regressive step to dismount those cavalry archers and give them guns. It made more sense to give these guns to low-grade infantry troops and that is precisely what Mamluk sultans in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did. the sultans recruited sons of mamluks, Egyptian peasants, Maghribis and so forth and then gave them the small amount of training necessary.

In general, firearms gave no very clear advantage on the battlefie4ld in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The deployment of cannons on the field could actually contribute to defeat by creating a static defence line and making the troops less mobile. The Earl of Warwick's defeat at the second battle of St Albans has already been mentioned. Similarly, as we shall see, Ṭūmānbāy, the last Mamluk Sultan of Egypt, placed too much faith in fixed emplacements defended by

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[38] L.J.D. Collins, "The military organization and tactics of the Crimean Tatars during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", in V.J. Parry and M.E. Yapp (eds.), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (Oxford, 1975), 257–76.

[39] On the training of the Mamluk horse-archer, see Hasanein Rabie, "The Training of the Mamluk Fāris" in Parry and Yapp, *War Technology and Society*, 153–63.

cannons, and it was this faith in gunpowder as some kind of victory-bearing talisman and this contributed to his decisive defeat at Raydāniyya in 1517.

The medieval cannon had several serious weaknesses, a few of which can be noted here. First, first because of poor casting techniques, the early cannons had a low life-expectancy. Sooner or later they blew up quite a few on their first trial—especially cannons cast from iron.[40] Secondly, they had a slow rate of fire. One reason for this was that the cannon needed cooling and washing with vinegar and water before it could be reloaded. If all went well, ten shots might be fired in an hour, but evidently, if the cavalry charged the guns, then the gunners would only be able loose off one shot before the attackers were upon the guns. Thirdly, the projectile force of a medieval cannon was not as great as it would become by the seventeenth century. Medieval gunners used serpentine powder. Modern gunpowder is nearly twice as strong. Corned (or granulated) powder was introduced in the West in the 1430s (at about the time the handgun began to be used in battles) and it was somewhere between the two in strength. However, one problem with corned powder is that it needed to be fired from stronger-cast barrels. Fourthly, in the case of the earliest guns, each shot needed individual ignition by the gunner and the gunner needed to keep a match alight for this purpose. (Matchlock ignition only began to appear in Europe in the mid-fifteenth century.) Fifthly, the early handgun, or arquebus, had a short range and its shots had relatively little penetrating power. Musket-shot had much greater range and penetrating power, but use of the musket only became general in the late sixteenth century. Sixthly, the stone balls fired by early guns were labour-intensive to make. There was no standardisation of calibre, so ammunition had to be specifically tailored to a specific gun. Seventhly, the recoil from early guns was such that it could break an unwary gunner's ribs. Eighthly, early cannons were cumbrous and it might take a long time to bring them to the field. It took twenty-four horses to pull a heavy gun and three to pull a light gun (or falcon). Once on the field artillery hampered the free movement of one's own cavalry.

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[40] See, for examples of guns exploding on trial during Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī's reign, Carl Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (Albany, N.Y., 1994), 192–3.

(When one considers these and other problems, it seems a miracle that gunpowder technology ever took off at all.) Probably the early guns were most effective in frightening the horses (and this may have been what happened at Chaldiran).[41]

However, though gun-carriages and munitions carts might slow the progress of an army, once they had arrived on the battlefield, they might, if disposed in a ring or some other line of defence, provide a cover quite independent of the fire of the guns themselves. One way of looking at Selīm's victory over the Mamluks is as the triumph of Turkish "wheel culture" over "Egypto-Syrian camel and mule culture".[42] The Ottoman *'arabas* (carts) were chained together and used as *Wagenburgs*, or *Lagers*, which could easily be defended against cavalry charges. This was also the practice of the Bohemian Hussites.[43] Such *Lagers* were defended by both cannons and bows The Ottomans were masters in the use of wagons for defence. When in 1516, the Damascan chronicler, Ibn Ṭūlūn went to visit the Janissaries camped outside Damascus, he was most impressed by the carts used to carry the big guns and which were chained together to form a line of defence. He said that he had never seen anything like that before. Safavid cavalry failed to penetrate the Ottoman line of wagons at Chaldiran.[44] Thereafter, they adopted the practice themselves and Shah Ṭahmāsp successfully deployed 700 *'araba*s and four cannons against the Uzbeks in 1528. Previously, the Mamluk Sultan Ṭūmānbāy had deployed wagons (less effectively, of course) at Raydāniyya—the wagons serving to defend his cannons as well as his Maghribi and Sudanese musketeers.[45]

It has been argued above that there were good military reasons for being cautious about the wholesale adoption of firearms, whereas Ayalon and others have suggested that the Mamluk elite resisted the

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[41] On the problems and disadvantages of firearms in general, see Cipolla, 27–28; John Francis Guilmartin, Jr., *Gunpowder and Galleons*, 157–75; Gillingham, *Wars of the Roses*, 19; Geoffrey Parker, "The Gunpowder Revolution" in Geoffrey Parker (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare* (Cambridge, 1992), 107–9.

[42] On the relative rarity of carts in the Arab lands in pre-modern times, see Richard Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975).

[43] Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleons*, 256n., 258; Christopher Allmand, "New Weapons, New Tactics", in Parker *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare*, 97.

[44] On Chaldiran, see *EI*² (2nd ed.), s.v. Čaldiran. [J.R. Walsh]; R.M. Savory, "The Sherley Myth", *Iran*, vol. V, (1967), 73–81; idem, *Iran under the Safavids* (Cambridge, 1980), 41–47.

[45] On the sources for the Battle of Raydāniyya and its outcome, see below.

adoption of firearms for psychological and chivalric reasons. However, evidence for a chivalric ethic or ideology attached to the science of *furūsiyya* (horsemanship and the related military skills) would appear to be very slight indeed. *Furūsiyya* manuals dealt with practical skills and did not waste any space on expounding a chivalric ethos.[46] It is perhaps worth noting that Faraj, who of all the Mamluk sultans was the one most praised for his *furūsiyya*, was also one of the most enthusiastic users of artillery (in his struggles against the Emir Shaykh).[47] At the very end of the Mamluk period, the Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī sought to revive the skills of *furūsiyya* and built a new maydān for the mounted exercises.[48] But Qānṣūh was also enthusiastic about guns. He had guns cast in Egypt. He bought guns from abroad. He raised an arquebus regiment to go and fight the Portuguese in the Red Sea.[49] As remarked above, since it would have been wasteful to issue arquebuses to the highly (and expensively trained force of extremely effective Mamluk horse archers, guns were customarily issued instead to *ḥalqa* troopers, Maghribis and other low grade footsoldiers.

I do not think that the Mamluks had a psychological problem regarding the acquisition of firearms. Their problem was rather material and logistical. Copper had to be imported from Europe for the most part. (The Tyrol was a major source of copper in the Middle Ages.)[50] The best source for wood (charcoal) and saltpetre, as well as iron was Ottoman-controlled Anatolia (and hence vulnerable to an embargo on the part of the Ottomans).[51] The Mamluks may also have had problems recruiting skilled gun-casters, for there was, of course, no tradition of casting church bells in the Middle East and the Mamluks were less well-placed than the Ottomans when it came to enslaving or recruiting skilled European workmen.

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[46] On Mamluk *furūsiyya* in general, see Ayalon, "Notes on the *Furūsiyya* Exercises and Games in the Mamluk Sultanate" in Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (ed.), *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet* (Jerusalem, 1977), 267–95; Rabie, "The training of the Mamluk Faris".

[47] On Faraj's *furūsiyya*, see Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, vol. VI, 271.

[48] 48. On the revival of *furūsiyya* under Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, see Ayalon 'Notes on Furusiyya Exercises', 43–44, 45, 51–52; Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians*, 191.

[49] Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians*, 192–96; Petry, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamluk Sultans al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in Egypt* (Seattle, 1993), 189–90, 205–6.

[50] Eliyahu Ashtor, *A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages* (London, 1976), 305, 325; Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 157.

[51] On measures to preserve the Lebanese forest, see Bertrandon de la Brocquière, 297.

When he came to discuss Qāytbāy's alleged indifference to artillery, Professor Ayalon observed that "[h]is indifference is of special interest in the light of the costly and protracted battles which Qāytbāy waged against the Ottomans and their satellite Shāh Siwār. In none of these battles is there any reference to the Mamluk army using artillery, whereas we may deduce from a casual remark that the Ottomans and Shāh Siwār did".[52] However, this is not the case. In the years 1465–71 the Mamluks fought a war against Shāh Siwār, a rebellious Dhu'l-Ghadrid prince in south-west Anatolia, whom the Ottomans were covertly sponsoring as a thorn in the flanks of the Mamluks. Then again in the years 1488–91 the Mamluks fought a war with the Ottomans over the status of Qaramān beylicate. The first thing to note is that the Mamluks won both these wars. Secondly, in discussing these wars, Ayalon cites Ibn Taghrī Birdī and Ibn Iyās as sources for the first war and Ibn Iyās alone for the second war. (So he has relied on rather few sources.) Thirdly, if the Mamluks had in fact failed to use artillery in these late-fifteenth-century wars, this would have been strange, for the Mamluk prince Ibrahim used cannon against the Qaramānid town of Laranda as early as 1419.[53] A little later Barsbāy used cannons against the Cypriot fleet at sea in 1424.[54] Then again, after Barsbāy had failed to take Āmid from the Āqqūyūnlū ruler Qara 'Uthmān in 1433, he ordered the casting of a brass canon weighing 1,20 qintars.[55] Finally, when the Mamluk general Nawkar set out against Ibn Qaramān in 1457, he took with him naphtha gunners.[56]

In the light of these precedents it is not surprising to find that the Mamluks did in fact make decisive use of artillery in their war against the Dhū'l-Ghadirid Amir Shāh Siwār. Ibn Ajā's "History of the Amīr Bashtak" (sic), also known as *Riḥlat al-Amīr Yashbak* ("Journey of the Amir Yashbak") is the most detailed account to have survived of Yashbak min Mahdī's campaign in1471 against Shāh Siwār. The Amir Yashbak min Mahdī was the Sultan Qāytbāy's leading general and the most powerful of all the amirs. While he lived, Yashbak

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[52] Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 48.
[53] Jawharī, *Nuzhat*, vol. II, 438.
[54] *Ibid.*, vol. III, 80; cf. *ibid.*, 91.
[55] Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, vol. IV, 906; Jawharī, *Nuzhat*, vol. III, 275; Aḥmad Darrag, *L'Égypte sous le règne de Barsbāy 825–841/1422–1438* (Damascus, 1961), 378–79.
[56] Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm*, vol. VII, 483.

seems to have been even more powerful than the Sultan himself. Since Ibn Ajā (d. 1476) was not only Yashbak's military *qāḍī*, but also his confidante, ambassador, and civilian aide-de-camp, he was in a position to know about what he wrote about.[57] It is important to note that in the course of this war the Ottomans did not use artillery, for the simple reason that they were not directly involved in the fighting. Indeed they sent what purported to be a friendly embassy to Yashbak.

Yashbak however did make use of artillery. In 1471 having marched north through Syria with a lot of infantry, he waited at Marj Dābiq for the *makāḥil* to catch up.[58] In the opening stage of the campaign, ʿAyntāb, intimidated by the Mamluk deployment of artillery and the subsequent nine days of bombardment, surrendered.[59] Thereafter the Mamluks used the city as their arsenal and the place where their gunpowder was stored.[60] Later on in the campaign the Mamluk general Īnāl, having invested Adana and demolished one of its towers through artillery, had to send for more gunpowder to finish off the operation.[61] Shāh Siwār himself did possess two cannons at Khirmān, but we only hear about these pieces when they were surrendered to the Mamluks. Indeed, they and the castle seem to have been surrendered to the Mamluks without a shot being fired and Yashbak subsequently used the captured guns against the fortifications of Zamanti. (It also seems, though the Arabic is not clear, that additional guns were cast for the siege of Zamanti.)[62] Zamanti was Shāh Siwār's final redoubt and, with its surrender in June 1472, the war was over. While it is true that artillery was not used by the Mamluks on the battlefield during this war, this was because Shāh Siwār never dared offer battle in the open field.[63] This was a war of sieges.

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[57] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Ajā, *Tārīkh al-Amīr Bashtāk al-Ẓāhirī*, ed. Aḥmad Tulaymat, (Cairo, 1974); on Ibn Ajā's life and writings, see Tulaymat's preface.

[58] Ibn Ajā, *Tarikh*, 74, 79–80.

[59] *Ibid.*, 79–83; Har-El, 93.

[60] Ibn Ajā, *Tarikh*, 123.

[61] *Ibid.*, 128.

[62] *Ibid.*, 140, 142.

[63] On the general progress of this campaign see Evrard, *Zur Geschichte Aleppos und Nordsyriens in letzen Halben Jahrhundert der Mamlukenherrschaft (872–924 AH) nach Arabischen and italeinischen Quellen* (Munich, 1974), 23–24; Har-El, 93–96.

It is indeed striking that in his account of the war against Shāh Siwār, Ibn Iyās, who was a Cairo-based civilian, makes no reference at all to the use of artillery. Neither for that matter does the *ḥadīth* expert and historian, Ibn Ḥajar, though he gave a much fuller account of the campaigning than Ibn Iyās's scrappy jottings. If we did not have Ibn Ajā's *Riḥla*, and we had to rely only on sources of the kind produced by Ibn Iyās and Ibn Ḥajar, then we might indeed conclude that the Mamluks ignored the potential of firearms and gunpowder. But the truth is that it was Arab, civilian, religious scholars who (not surprisingly) failed to register contemporary developments in military technology. Incidentally, this leads one to the broader reflection that the conventions, clichés and vocabulary employed by traditionally minded chroniclers of the Mamluk period similarly prevented them from registering other economic and technological changes. For one example among the many possible of this negative phenomenon—the numerous dogs that did not bark in the night—no Mamluk chronicler notes the rise of a luxury carpet industry in Cairo in the late fifteenth century, though that is what seems to have happened. But, to return to the firearms problem, Ibn Ḥajar, who was an admired literary stylist, may well have shrunk from such neologisms as *makāḥil al-nafṭ, zanburaq, bunduqiyya* and so forth. (Similarly, Froissart in his chronicling of the Hundred Years War omitted all reference to the English guns at Crecy, lest they be offensive to his cultivated French readers.)

As for the second war, that between the Mamluks and Ottomans, which was fought over the Tarsus-Adana region, this has been the subject of a well-researched and discriminating study by Shai Har-El, entitled *Struggle for Domination in the Middle East. The Ottoman Mamluk War, 1485–1491*.[64] The Egypto-Syrian army sent out to confront the Ottomans cast cannons at their camp at Ayas.[65] The Mamluks customarilly cast their cannons at Ayas, before proceeding further into Cilicia or Anatolia. Subsequently, the Mamluk general Uzbek, having defeated the Ottomans in the field, laid siege to Adana and attacked it, using cannons, mangonels and ballistas.[66] An Ottoman

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[64] For the campaign itself, see Har-El, 133–51; see also Evrard, *Zur Geschichte Nordsyriens*, 32–40.

[65] Jawharī, *Inbā'*, 263–64; Har-El, 139.

[66] Har-El, 140.

relief army engaged the Mamluk besiegers and succeeded in disabling some of their cannons, before it was crushingly defeated. Adana and Tarsus thereupon surrendered to the Mamluks.[67]

In renewed fighting in 1488, the Ottomans recaptured Cilicia and they then tried to use naval artillery to block the Syrian pass of Bāb al-Malik. However, strong winds sank some of the ships and dispersed the rest. The Mamluks advanced into the Cilician plain and at the Battle of Aga-Çayiri defeated the Ottomans. This was a cavalry battle in which firearms do not seem to have played a significant part. However, when, in 1490, fighting on a smaller scale continued in the region, Qāytbāy sent a force of *awlād al-nās*, equipped and trained to use the arquebus (*bunduq al-raṣāṣ*) as part of the Mamluk force which ravaged Ottoman Anatolia.[68]

If the Mamluks did not neglect firearms, then why did they lose to the Ottomans at the Battle of Marj Dābiq in Syria in 1516 and then again at Raydāniyya in Egypt in 1517? According to Professor Partington, a historian of *Gunpowder and Firearms* (and also one of Ayalon's *bêtes noires*) ("In 1514 an Ottoman army of 12,000 completely routed a Mamluk army much larger through the use of handguns.")[69] But nothing is correct in Partington's statement—not even the date! I turn now to the causes for the Mamluks' defeat in battle and the termination of their Sultanate.

The Mamluk Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, who was to command the Mamluk army at Marj Dābiq, was crazy about guns. Gun casting was intensive throughout his reign.[70] He also raised an arquebus regiment (as indeed Qāytbāy had done before him). However, it must be borne in mind that during the final crisis years of his reign many (perhaps all?) of the arquebusiers that had been raised in Egypt were actually campaigning in the Ḥijāz and Yemen where they were deployed against the Portuguese.[71] As for the cannons cast

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[67] *Ibid.*, 141–42.

[68] See note 33.

[69] Partington, *A History of Greek Fire and Gunpowder*, 209.

[70] On Qānṣūh's gun foundry at Rajab, which after early difficulties, was casting cannons from 1511 onwards, see Petry, *Twilight of Majesty*, 162–63; *Protectors or Praetorians*, 192–93.

[71] On the despatch in 1513, of the Fifth Corps, equipped with muskets to the Red Sea campaign, see Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 73–83; L.O. Schuman, *The Political History of the Yemen: Abu Makhrama's Account of 906–16/1500–21*, (Göttingen, 1960), 16–20, 69–78; Petry, *Protectors*, 60, 195; Halil Inalcik, "The Socio-Political

on al-Ghawrī's orders, many of those had been sent to defend the Delta ports, especially Alexandria, against an anticipated Ottoman naval attack (though no such attack ever came).[72]

In 1516, Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī led an army out of Egypt into Syria. His aim may have been the purely defensive one of defending Syria from a possible attack by the Ottoman troops led by Selīm the Grim. On the other hand, al-Ghawrī may have believed that Selīm was planning to invade Safavid Iran once more, in which case the Mamluk army might attack the Ottomans on the flank. Ghawrī's motives remain unclear.[73] The Mamluk Sultan, straining every resource, brought with him 5,000 royal mamluks from Egypt to the field at Marj Dābiq, but plainly his army was larger than that, for the royal mamluks were only an elite force within the larger body of the Sultan's army. In fact, the Venetian consul in Alexandria reported that the Sultan left Egypt with 15,000 mamluks and *awlād al-nās*, as well as between 25 and 30 pieces of artillery. (These last would presumably have been relatively light pieces of field artillery, rather than large guns of the size used, for example by Mehmed II to bring down the walls of Constantinople in 1453.) He also reported that a vast number of camels had had their ears stopped up so that they could be sent against artillery. The Venetian added that the Sultan was alleged to be able to add 150,000 Arabs (that is to say bedouins) to his army. However, the consul doubted this figure.[74] Even so, it seems likely that the Sultan would have recruited some thousands of auxiliary troops from the Bedouins and others.

The Sultan would certainly have added to his forces as he passed through Syria. Syrian troops had previously borne the brunt of the fighting against the Turkomans, the Safavids and rebellious Bedouins. Apart from Mamluk elite forces garrisoned in the cities, the Syrian troops seem to have been predominantly foot-soldiers. Many of these

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Effects of the Diffusion of Fire-arms in the Middle East" in Yapp and Parry, *War, Technology and Society*, 202–3.

[72] Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 50, 112n., 113n.

[73] On the political and diplomatic background to Marj Dābiq, see H. Jansky, "Die Eroberung Syriens durch Sultan Selīm I", *Mitteilungen zur Osmanischen Geschichte*, vol. II (1923–26) 173–224; Jean-Louis Bacqué Grammont, *Les Ottomans, les Safavides et leurs voisins: Contribution à l'histoire des relations internationals dans l'Orient Islamique de 1514 à* 1524, (Istanbul, 1987), esp. 187–209; Michael Winter, "The Ottoman Occupation" in Carl Petry (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. I, *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517* (Cambridge, 1998), 492–96.

[74] Marino Sanudo, *Diarii* (G. Berchet ed.), (Venice, 1877–1900), vol. XXII, 485–86.

would have been *'ushrān*, semi-nomadic Arabs who usually fought as infantry—often as archers on foot. The highlands of Palestine and Lebanon were major recruiting grounds for such troops. Ibn Ajā's account of the earlier war fought by Yashbak against Shāh Siwār provides quite lot of detail about the recruitment of Syrian auxiliary forces. (Press-gang tactics, as well as promises of money were used to bring such men into the field.) Apart from Arab tribesmen, Kurds and Turkomans were regularly recruited for major campaigns.

It seems that likely that some of the Syrian troops, both from the towns and the countryside, possessed firearms. As early as 1498 Kurtbāy, the *Nā'ib* of Damascus, was training men to handle hand-guns and assigning uniforms and barracks to them.[75] Moreover, official initiatives apart, it would be surprising if the Druze, the Kurds and Arab tribesmen of Syria had not sought to acquire guns for their own use. The Banū Sakhr were using arquebuses in their attacks against Syrian villages as early as 1502–3.[76] (An Ottoman *firmān* for Palestine in 1527 sought to address the problem of Bedouin buying muskets—often muskets that were superior in quality to the ones that the Janissaries possessed—from ports like Acre. In that year there were already an estimated 7,000 muskets in the *Sanjak* of Safad alone. It seems that Italian and French merchants were trading guns for local cotton).[77]

Mamluk numbers had of course been depleted by the plagues of 1505 and 1513. According to Paolo Giovio, Qānṣūh brought 13,000 mamluks with him into Syria, though the total number of his army was much larger than that.[78] According to the sixteenth-century Syrian, Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, Qanṣūh al-Ghawrī advanced north-wards out of Aleppo with 30,000 men.[79] However, Michael Winter believes that Qanṣūh's army may have numbered as few as 5,000–7,000 soldiers.[80] Selīm's army was certainly larger than the Mamluk one.

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[75] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat al-khillān fī ḥawādith al-zamān*, Mohamed Mosṭafā, ed., (Cairo, 1962–64), vol. I, 201–02.

[76] Henri Laoust, *Les Gouverneurs de Damas sous les Mamlouks et les Premiers Ottomans (658–1156/1260–1744)*, (Damascus, 1952), 92–93.

[77] R.C. Jennings, "Firearms, Bandits and Gun Control", *Archivium Ottomanicum*, vol. VI (1980), 339–58.

[78] Paolo Giovio, *Historiarum Sui Temporis*, vol. I , (Paris, 1558–60), lxxxb–lxxxia.

[79] Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, *Al-Kawākib al-sā'ira*, ed. Jibrāil Sulaymān Jabbūr, (Beirut, 1945–59), vol. I, 296.

[80] Winter, "The Ottoman occupation", 496, cf. 498.

When one thinks of Ottoman armies, one tends to think first and foremost of the famous Janissaries, or "New Troops". It is true that the Janissaries furnished an important part of the Ottoman army. However, they were, in a sense, the rejects of the Ottoman *devshirme* and palace school system. They did not furnish the bulk of Selīm's army, for they were outnumbered by the *sipahi* cavalry and by the *yaya*, or free-born infantry. In Selīm's reign they do not seem to have been a particularly well-disciplined force. They had mutinied soon after the Battle of Chaldiran. Then they mutinied again at their winter quarters in Amasya and had to be sent back to Istanbul for reorganisation. In the fifteenth century the Janissaries seem still to have been predominantly a force of infantry archers and it was only slowly that they were equipped with guns. However, as has been noted, it has been suggested that the process of re-equipping the Janissaries may have speeded up somewhat after Ottoman defeats at the hands of the Mamluks in the war of 1485–91. Even so, according to Guilmartin it was only by the end of the sixteenth century that most of the Janissaries were equipped with *tüfeks*, or muskets. At the naval Battle of Lepanto (1571) most of the Janissaries seem to have been archers.[81]

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine how large a proportion of Selīm's army in 1516 consisted of Janissaries. However, various contemporaries offered guesstimates of the size of the Ottoman army as a whole. According to Contarini, who was based in Cyprus at the time, Selīm passed through the Taurus region en route for Syria with 200,000 men, though he added that Selīm's army was for the most part ill-disciplined and poorly equipped.[82] According to the Damascan chronicler, Ibn Ṭūlūn, the Ottoman army that entered Damascus after the Battle of Marj Dābiq numbered 130,000. He added that Selīm's army was a heterogenous lot, including Rūmis,

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[81] Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleons*, 251. The Turkish cavalry elite, like the Mamluk cavalry elite was reluctant to handle guns themselves, preferring to leave them in the hands of low grade infantry. Ogier de Busbecq reported that when, in 1552, Rustam Pasha prepared for the third campaign against the Persians, he armed his cavalry with muskets. However, many of the cavalrymen promptly broke or lost their guns and they all complained about the way gunpowder dirtied their uniforms and they successfully argued that they should revert to using bows and arrows. (*The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople 1554–1562*, tr. Edward Seymour Forster, Oxford, 1927, 123–24).

[82] Letter from Andrea Contarini in Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. XXII, 659.

Armenians, Tatars, Siwāriyya (who were presumably troops formerly in the service of Shāh Siwār?), Franks and others.[83] According to Ibn Iyās, a renegade from the Ottoman army reported that the Ottoman force that subsequently advanced on Egypt consisted of 60,000 men.[84] (It should be borne in mind that Selīm would have left substantial garrisons in the main Syrian cities.) Thomas Venier gave an even smaller figure. According to his contemporary report, Selīm's forces, which subsequently fought against Ṭūmānbāy in Egypt, numbered 25–30,000 horsemen and 8,000 Janissaries of which half were schiopeteri (marksmen, presumably both gunners and archers) and half were *ronchonieri* (pikemen).[85] (Several other European reports confirm the estimate of half the Janissaries as being *schiopeteri*.) Returning to the Battle of Marj Dābiq in 1516, Ibn Zunbul, in his account of the battle, says that the Mamluk army was heavily outnumbered, with 2,000 mamluks facing an Ottoman force of 150,000—for what that is worth.[86] However, the historical testimony of Ibn Zunbul is worth very little. (I will come back to him.)

One reason, then for the Mamluk defeats at Marj Dābiq and subsequently was that they were outnumbered. Secondly, the Mamluk commander, Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, who was some eighty years old, died of a fit (of apoplexy?) half way through the battle. Thirdly, there were traitors in the Mamluk ranks, most notably the Emir Khāyrbak, who led his section of the army off the battlefield. (Ibn Zunbul placed particularly heavy stress on role of traitors in turning what had begun as a Mamluk victory into a defeat.) Fourthly, there were tensions between the *qarāniṣa* (seasoned mamluks) and the *julbān* (recent recruits). The former resented the fact that they were being used in the charges on Ottoman positions, while the *julbān* were held back. Fifthly, the ill-disciplined looting of Ottoman supplies by Mamluk cavalry played a part in the Mamluks' ultimate defeat.[87]

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[83] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, vol. II, 29.
[84] Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i'*, vol. III, 121.
[85] Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. XXIV, 171.
[86] Ibn Zunbul, *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, 129.
[87] On the Battle of Marj Dābiq, see Ibn Iyās, *Bada'ī'*, vol. V, 66–70; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, vol. II, 23–24; Ibn Zunbul, *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, 26–33; Sanudo, *Diarii*, vol. XXIII, 107–36; Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 60; Winter, "The Ottoman Occupation", 498–99.

It is also possible that firearms contributed to the Mamluk defeat. But let us consider the matter carefully. Ibn Iyās mentions Ottoman firearms. Ibn Ṭūlūn writes of the Mamluks being driven off by men firing *bunduq al-raṣāṣ* (lead pellets?). However, what was used to fire off this sort of ammunition? One may be tempted to think that musketry fire is being referred to here. However, a subsequent mention of *bunduq al-raṣāṣ* by Damascan chronicler, Ibn Ṭūlūn, in the context of his account of Selīm's entry into Damascus, reveals that each *bunduq al-raṣāṣ* was as big as a fist and they were fired by field-guns on boxes mounted on wagons which could be chained together. Selīm entered Damascus with 30 of these guns. They were field cannon then rather than muskets or handguns.[88] As for artillery, it seems to have caused more panic than actual damage. What caused more of a problem for the Mamluk horsemen was their inability to break through the Ottoman Lager of chained wagons. Even so, Marj Dābiq was a close run affair. At noon it was still looking as though the Mamluks were going to win.[89] Venetian and Rhodian observers, as well as Ottoman informants, agreed that Selīm's losses had been heavy. Approximately 15,000 Turks had been killed. Mamluk losses were relatively light (500–1,000), as so many of them preferred to run away and fight another day.

Turning now to the second big battle, that fought at Raydāniyya, a little to the north of Cairo in 1517, no source, not even Ibn Zunbul, claimed that Raydāniyya was lost because the Mamluks failed to use artillery.[90] In fact, a contemporary letter by an Arab scribe in the Ottoman army reveals that Ṭūmānbāy's men collected guns from all over Egypt, including *makāḥil*, *kufiyāt*, *sabaqiyāt*, and *bunduqiyāt*.[91] According to Ibn Iyās, Ṭūmānbāy initially mustered more than thirty cannons mounted on carts, and more guns were deployed by gunners mounted on camels and others were carried by footsoldiers. (As Ayalon has noted, Ṭūmānbāy was extremely keen on guns.) By the eve of battle, Ṭūmānbāy had increased his firepower to more

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[88] Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, vol. II, 29.

[89] *Ibid.*, 24.

[90] On the Battle of Raydāniyya, see Ibn Iyās, *Badā'iʿ*, vol. V, 142–3; Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, vol. II, 43–47; Ibn Zunbul, *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, 50–52; Sanudo, *Diarii*, 162–63, 171; Paolo Giovio, *History of the Turks*, lxxxviia–lxxxixa; Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms*, 51–52, 83–85; Winter, "The Ottoman Occupation", 502–3.

[91] Quoted in extenso in Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Mufākahat*, vol. II, 45.

one hundred brass cannons on carts. Additionally, he had recruited 200 Turkoman and Maghribi artillerymen, plus black slave gunners (*ʿabīd nafṭiyya*). The Egyptian army dug ditches and raised screens at Raydāniyya and placed Frankish and other marksmen there. When the Egyptians attacked the Ottoman vizier, Sinān, on the right wing, they did so with guns and the Ottoman Turks drove them off with swords.

What happened at Raydāniyya was that Ṭūmānbāy's redoubts and entrenched positions were outflanked by the more mobile Ottoman troops who outflanked and attacked the gun emplacements from the rear. Ṭūmānbāy's faith in artillery had led him to adopt too inactive a role on the battlefield. (Moreover, according to report by the Grand Master of the Hospitallers at Rhodes, Ṭūmānbāy's flight from the field was provoked by reports of a Maghribi uprising in Cairo.)[92] The Ottoman victory at Raydāniyya proved to be decisive. Even so their losses had again been heavy.

From all the foregoing, it should be clear that the Mamluks' failure to appreciate fully the significance of firearms did not contribute significantly to their defeat by the Ottomans in the early sixteenth century. The only prejudice the Mamluk sultans had regarding firearms was a prejudice in their favour. The only problem they had with firearms was that could not get enough of them. The contrary view relies heavily on Ibn Zunbul's narrative of the struggle between the Mamluks and the Ottomans. Ibn Zunbul placed heavy emphasis on the role of gunpowder in bringing about the ruin and destruction of Mamluk chivalry. According to Ayalon, "The evidence gathered from Ibn Zunbul's work proves beyond any shadow of doubt that by far the most important cause of Mamluk defeat was the Ottoman use of firearms". But Ibn Zunbul's narrative of the Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria is not the sort of source on which one can rely for indubitable proof of anything whatsoever. Ibn Zunbul's background, chronology and literary aims are so far poorly explored and the issues raised by his various books are so complex, that I am publishing an article devoted specifically to his shadowy life and confusing writings.[93] For the time being, it suffices to remark that it is

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[92] Sanudo, *Diarii*, 171.

[93] Forthcoming, as "Ibn Zunbul and the Romance of History", to be published in *The Status of Medieval Arabic Literature*, Julia Bray and James Montgomery, eds.

not clear when Ibn Zunbul was born, or when he died, or when he produced the various versions of his story of the conflict between Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī and Selīm. On the other hand it is also clear that much of what Ibn Zunbul reports could not possibly have happened (unless, that is, one believes in telepathy, magic and witchcraft). It also seems probable that he was only a child at the time of the Ottoman occupation of Egypt. (He certainly was not Qānsūh al-Ghawrī's court astrologer, as Benjamin Lellouche has recently claimed.)[94] Rather this fascinating writer, who flourished in the 1560s and 70s, has claims to be considered as the Arab world's first historical novelist. It is true that, in his romanticised version of the downfall of the Mamluks, (the correct title of which is *Kītāb infiṣāl dawlat al-awān wa'l-ittiṣāl dawlat Banī 'Uthmān*), he stressed the importance of gunpowder and firearms in bringing about the defeat of the Mamluks. However, he made use of this as an excuse to explain the downfall of his chivalrous Mamluk heroes. The speeches in which Mamluk officers denounce firearms and their effects are clearly fictitious. Moreover, though Ibn Zunbul did indeed stress the importance of firearms, he laid even greater stress on the role of traitors within the Mamluk ranks and, above all, he repeatedly observed that when God has decreed the end of a dynasty, that dynasty is indeed doomed.

While it is the case that the deployment of firearms brought with it certain problems, the fact that the Mamluk empire maintained so grand a presence in the eastern Mediterranean for so long was in some measure due to its adoption and deployment of firearms. Indeed, the Mamluk Sultanate may be regarded as the first, though one of the most short-lived, of the "gunpowder empires" of the Islamic world.

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[94] Benjamin Lellouche, "Ibn Zunbul, Un Égyptien Face à l'Universalisme Ottoman (Seizième Siècle)", *SI*, vol. LXXXIX (1994), 144–55.

XXI

FUTUWWA: CHIVALRY AND GANGSTERISM IN MEDIEVAL CAIRO

A *tadhkira* (memorandum) prepared some time in the 1280s, which gave general instructions for the management of Egypt during the absence of Sultan Qalawun from that land, also provided a fairly clear general picture of where the trouble spots of Cairo were. The memorandum directed those in charge of the city to take special care in patrolling certain areas, especially "the Nile bank, the cemeteries, and ponds such as the Elephant's Pool *(Birkat al-Fīl)* and the Abyssinian Pool *(Birkat al-Habash)*...and certain public halls in the Husayniyya Quarter known as *Qāʿāt al-Futuwwa*, where turbulent folk hang out."[1]

What were the *Qāʿāt al-Futuwwa* (Halls of Chivalry), and why were they so dangerous? As we shall see, in the mean streets of al-Husayniyya there flourished a Chandleresque combination of chivalry and gangsterism. In English "chivalry" and "gangsterism" are two words; in medieval Arabic one word may suffice: *futuwwa*. If the chivalrous aspects of the institution are only briefly dealt with here, this is because they have hitherto received more attention from scholars. The earliest Western studies of this puzzling phenomenon concentrated almost exclusively on them; Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall took the lead with a barmy essay in which he not only identified *futuwwa* as an Oriental institution corresponding to Western chivalry but also linked the drinking cup of *futuwwa* initiation with the Holy Grail.[2] In general, early Western studies of medieval Islam were bedeviled and distorted by the impulse to look for Eastern equivalents of the chivalry of Christendom. Hence the preoccupation with Saracenic heraldry and Saracen fiefs (as *iqṭāʿ*s were understood to be) as well as with the poorly understood phenomena of *furūsiyya* and *futuwwa*. Western scholars went looking for Saracen knights and Arabian orders of chivalry and, with some difficulty, found them. For example, A. N. Poliak, writing in 1939, offered a misleading description of *futuwwa*: "The order of knights devoted to Muhammad's posterity, *al-futuwwa*, which was headed by the sultan and open to native knights, ceased to exist in the fourteenth century, probably owing to the growing exclusiveness of the 'Turkish' nobility."[3] Poliak probably took his lead from much earlier speculations by Étienne Quatremère, who had similarly linked *futuwwa* with the *ashrāf* (descendants of the Prophet).[4]

Fatā is a young man. *Futuwwa* literally means "youngmanliness" and, more specifically, the qualities that should be possessed by a young man—honor, generosity, courage, and solidarity with his confreres. (The corresponding Iranian term is *javānmardī*.)[5] Although there is, I think, no evidence for the existence of *futuwwa* prior to the tenth century, its devotees traced the origins of *futuwwa* back to ʿAli and, through ʿAli, back to Ibrahim. In the course of the tenth to thirteenth centuries the institution spread through Iran, Iraq, Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt. *Futuwwa* lodges seem to have been meeting-places for "les jeunes" (to borrow the term used by the historian of medieval France, Georges Duby).[6] That is to say, they were places where men who were too young to marry could get together and...well, it depended. Sometimes these lodges were no more than sports clubs; sometimes they acquired political interests and turned into local factions; sometimes they became closely linked with particular crafts and produced something akin to guild solidarity; but sometimes they turned away from the world and dedicated themselves to mystical devotions. In the early thirteenth century, a number of Sufi writers produced treatises that were devoted wholly or in part to the inner aspects of *futuwwa*. (Most notable among them was Ibn al-ʿArabi, who addressed three chapters of *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* to the subject).

The earliest surviving treatise on *futuwwa*, written in the tenth century by Ibn al-Husayn al-Sulami, stressed the importance of feasting, hospitality, and good fellowship. In the early fourteenth century, Ibn Battuta received a great deal of hospitality in Anatolian towns from the *akhi*s, the Turkish equivalents of the Arabic *fityān*. Ibn Battuta's welcome as a visiting stranger may suggest that a primary function of *futuwwa* lodges was to offer hospitality to visitors, as does

the special status of Ibrahim, or Abraham, as one of the patrons of *futuwwa*, for it was reported of Ibrahim that he never dined alone, since he always had guests at his dinners.[7] In the 1180s there was an attempt to regularize the existence of such lodges and to bring them under central control, as the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad, al-Nasir li-Din Allah (r. 1180–1225) declared himself the head of all the *futuwwa* lodges in Iraq and elsewhere. Al-Nasir's patronage was perhaps designed to reconcile his Sunni and Shi'i subjects in a broadly tolerant umbrella organization.[8] It was also a means of extending the caliph's influence beyond his frontiers, since he conferred investiture on foreign princes as an honor—a sort of Middle Eastern anticipation of the Burgundian Order of the Golden Fleece.[9]

However, the elevated status of *futuwwa* in Iraq was a transitory phenomenon, for in 1258 the Mongols captured Baghdad and put the last of the city's caliphs to death. Subsequently in 1261 the Abbasid caliphate was revived in Cairo, and the first act of the newly installed caliph was to ceremonially invest Mamluk Sultan Baybars with the trousers of *futuwwa*—a sort of girding with knighthood. In 1263 Baybars in his turn invested the second of the Cairo caliphs with *futuwwa*. There was a lot of fuss about these ceremonies at the time, and in the same year the trousers of *futuwwa* were sent to Bereke of the Golden Horde. Arab chiefs of the Khafaja tribe were also invested with *futuwwa*. Quite a bit later, in 1292, Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil invested a chieftain of the Hakkari Kurds in Upper Iraq with *futuwwa*. Thereafter there are no more references to courtly *futuwwa*. It was defunct.[10]

But if we move on to the twentieth century and consult a dictionary of colloquial Egyptian, we find *fityuwwa* defined as "neighborhood strong-man and protector of local interests, bully, tough-guy, hood."[11] Moreover, Sawsan al-Messiri's article on the sociology of *futuwwa* in modern Egypt does not deal with any sort of chivalric revival à la Mark Girouard. Rather the article is about neighborhood protection rackets and roughnecks.[12] The modern roughnecks discussed by Messiri and others, though they usually belong to gangs, do not appear to have undergone initiation rituals, nor do they trouble to trace the spiritual origins of what they are doing back to 'Ali and Ibrahim.

Staying with modern *futuwwa*, one finds that it features prominently in modern Egyptian novels and films—most notably the novels of Naguib Mahfouz. *Futuwwa* toughs make a minor appearance in one of Mahfouz's early works, as the bullies of schoolchildren in *Bayn al-qasrayn* (published in 1956; the English translation of 1990 is entitled *Palace Walk*). Their importance grows considerably in his later fiction. Mahfouz's religio-sociological allegory, *Awlâd hâratinâ* (1967; translated in 1972 as *Children of Gebelawi*), is ostensibly devoted to *futuwwa* toughs who dominate the *hâras*. The rival strong-arm men in the *hâra* chronicled by Mahfouz are all descendants of Jabalawi (namely, God), and the novel only ends with the explosive destruction of these small-time local gangsters. Mahfouz's novel *Malhamat al-harâfish* (1977; translated in 1994 as *The Harafish*), an epic saga of urban riffraff, is similarly dominated by gang wars and intrigues. The very word used by Mahfouz in his title, *harâfish*, is no longer part of modern Egyptian. In a study of medieval urban life under the Mamluk sultans, Ira Lapidus described *harâfish* as "beggars and menials" who "formed a turbulent and dangerous mob."[13] As I have noted in a review of this novel, Mahfouz in *Malhamat al-harâfish* has shaken off Western fictional models and "gone back to the oral storytelling tradition and revived the traditional romance, which dealt with the activities of such legendary urban criminals as Mercury Ali, Crafty Delilah, and Ahmad the Sickness. Such tales, which celebrate the craftiness and courage of rogues, have always been popular with the *futuwwa* gangsters who 'protect' the various quarters of Cairo."[14]

In portraying these toughs, Mahfouz seems to have been drawing on childhood memory as much as on imagination. Interviewed by the novelist Gamal al-Ghitany, he looked back with actual nostalgia on the toughs of the Gamaliyya quarter of Cairo in the opening decades of this century—in particular, their storming of the local police station had lodged in his memory.[15] The *futuwwa* toughs of Mahfouz's novels are not always unmitigated villains, and Mahfouz's attitude to the real-life social phenomenon was and is tinged with ambivalence. He has gone on record with the view that the *futuwwa* leaders of the 1920s and 30s were protectors of the quarters rather than their oppressors, adding, however, that "as with some rulers, the protector sometimes turned into a usurper."[16] Mahfouz, who was involved in the film industry for much of his career, scripted the screenplay of *al-Futuwwa*. This film, directed by Salah Abou Seif and released in 1957, dealt with the unedifying career of Zaydan, the "Vegetable King," a racketeer who used violence and corruption to dominate the vegetable market. Haridi, a naive immigrant newly arrived from the countryside, rallies the neighborhood to overthrow Zaydan, but in the course of the struggle Haridi himself becomes corrupted and in his turn

becomes the "Vegetable King."[17] In the 1950s Mahfouz was also involved in the making of Tawfiq Salih's *Futuwwat al-Husayniyya* (Tough-guys of the Husayni Quarter), a period gangster movie set in 1905.[18]

Indeed *futuwwa* has come to designate a whole genre of modern Egyptian cinema. As the authors of *Arab and African Film Making* observe, "The word *futuwwa* in the Middle Ages and in religious contexts generally designated ideals of chivalry and brotherhood. By now, in Egypt at least, its meaning has degenerated so that it denotes a kind of bully system, a sort of marketplace Mafia, in which any boss who loses his iron grip on his followers will rapidly be replaced by the next-toughest aspirant around." (As Lizbeth Malkmus notes, this is perhaps faintly reminiscent of the Khaldunian cycle of corruption and decay.)[19] In the films devoted to *futuwwa*, the plot usually revolves around the theme of an honorable man becoming corrupted in the course of trying to fight the system (as in Salah Abou Seif's film referred to above). The *futuwwa* system always wins (just as Al Pacino is progressively corrupted in *The Godfather*). In *futuwwa* films and the Coppola *Godfather* series alike there is great play with the themes of honor and shame, though the honor in question is, of course, that of thieves. This gangster corruption quite often carries overtones of political allegory, and the political fatalism of such films is vaguely reminiscent of the cynical watchword of di Lampedusa's great novel, *The Leopard*: "Things must change in order that they stay the same."

However most of the above is by way of digression. To return (a little reluctantly) to the Middle Ages, it seems that some time between 1261 and modern times a sea change took place in the nature of *futuwwa*—a descent from caliphal patents of honor to muscling in on small-time rackets in the local markets of Cairo. And in fact Qalawun's *tadhkira*, quoted earlier, strongly suggests that by the 1280s *futuwwa* had already acquired pejorative connotations. It seems that al-Husayniyya was the chief stamping ground of the adherents of *futuwwa*. This area lay to the north of Qahira proper, outside the Bab al-Futuh. From Fatimid times onwards it had been settled by low-grade troopers, and in the early Mamluk period the area continued to provide lodgings for military men. In the 1260s, during the reign of Baybars I, the suburb was further colonized by immigrants of Mongol origin, who had fled to the Mamluks from the Mongol Ilkhanate; still more of them arrived in the 1290s. Baybars probably built his mosque on the northern edge of Husayniyya in order to encourage colonization in the area. In the thirteenth century Husayniyya was the most dangerous of all the suburbs of Cairo, for it was the home of the "Sons of al-Husayniyya," otherwise known as the *harāfish*.[20] The *harāfish* appear to have had a degree of organization and, at times at least, a recognized overall leader, a Sultan of the *Harāfish*.[21]

In a late Syrian version of the *Sīrat al-Zāhir Baybars*, the medieval folk epic devoted to the largely fictional exploits of the historical Sultan al-Zahir Baybars (1260–77), we are told that Baybars as a young mamluk was in the service of an amir called Najm al-Din al-Bunduqdari, who had his palace in al-Husayniyya. (There is, of course, no truth in any of this.) In this quarter the young Baybars found his friends and allies among the good-hearted thieves and beggars who described themselves as the Sons of Husayniyya.[22] In general, the *Sīra* takes a very benign view of the *harāfish* and other lowlife types who inhabited al-Husayniyya and the other squalid suburbs of Cairo, such as Bab al-Luq. Usta ʿUthman, "Flower of the Gangsters," a liveryman and one of the main heroes of the popular cycle, is identified as being one of the *shuṭṭār* (and I will come to the significance of this term shortly).

In the real, non-fictional world, al-Husayniyya was also a recognized recruiting ground for *zuʿʿar*, or neighborhood militias of young cudgelmen, and was notorious for vice and crime. As the already-mentioned *tadhkiras* indicate, al-Husayniyya was an area over which it was necessary to exercise special vigilance. It was perhaps also not entirely coincidental that Shaykh Khadr al-Mihrani, the populist, rabble-rousing Sufi shaykh and spiritual guru of Baybars, had his *zāwiya* just outside the Bab al-Futuh.[23] According to al-Maqrizi, in the early fourteenth century the suburb improved a bit, becoming gentrified to some extent even though it was still the place to watch acrobats, prizefighters, and other street performers. But then in the 1360s the quarter was attacked by a plague of worms that ate food, paper, and wood. Roofs collapsed, and many houses were abandoned. A flood followed in 1375. The suburb reverted to its slummy ways and in al-Maqrizi's own time—the early fifteenth century—the place was miserable, underpopulated, and controlled by *zuʿʿar* racketeers.[24] According to al-Qalqashandi, the soldiers who used to live in al-Husayniyya moved to lodgings closer to the Citadel. However, later yet in the fifteenth century, the area was particularly favored by Qaytbay, whose powerful ally, the amir Yashbak, built his *qubba* there.[25] Moreover, there is evidence of continued settlement in Ottoman times, when the butchers and abattoirs were concentrated in this area.

From the eighteenth century onwards, the butchers, a notoriously tough body of men, linked their activities with the Sufi Bayumiyya order, which was powerful in the quarter.[26] During Bonaparte's occupation of Egypt, al-Husayniyya, with its turbulent population, proved to be one of the main foci of resistance to the French, so that in the end the French were driven to attempt to raze at least part of the quarter.[27]

As has already been noted, Mongol immigrants were settled in al-Husayniyya as early as the 1260s. In the years 1294 to 1296 a new wave of immigrants, the Oirats (that is, the western tribe of Mongols, also known as Kalmuks), deserted to the Mamluks, and Sultan Kitbugha settled them in al-Husayniyya. The Arab chroniclers remarked on a number of things concerning the Oirats: First, that they were not Muslims and therefore did not observe Ramadan and also un-Islamically clubbed horses about the head before eating them. Second, that they were astonishingly beautiful, and therefore Oirat women were much sought-after as brides by the Mamluk elite. Also, according to al-Maqrizi's *Khiṭaṭ,* the Oirats "became known for their *zuʿara* (gangsterism) and *shujāʿa* (boldness), and they were called *al-Badūra*. So an individual Oirat might be called *al-Badr* such-and-such. They adopted the dress of *futuwwa,* and they carried weapons. Stories about these people proliferated."[28] Later on their fortunes declined, and many ended up working as menial servants in the Citadel.[29] These Mongol immigrants may be seen as the medieval Cairene precursors of the Sicilian mafiosi of New York. It also seems likely that they organized their activities on the basis of *futuwwa* lodges. (Indeed it is possible that there was no such thing as popular *futuwwa* in Egypt prior to the arrival of the Oirats and that they brought its rituals with them from Ilkhanid Iraq. While al-Maqrizi clearly did not think that the Oirats were Muslims, they may still have thought of themselves as such.)

If one turns to al-Turkumani al-Hanafi's treatise on *bidʿa,* or irreligious innovation, entitled *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fi 'l-hawādīth wa 'l-bidaʿ*, which was completed around 1300, one finds the relationship between membership in *futuwwa* and disreputable behavior confirmed. According to al-Turkumani, *futuwwa* is something that angers God and delights Satan, for it fosters crime and sedition. The young men in *futuwwa* lodges organize themselves into militias. They learn to become handy with knives, and if one of their number should be apprehended and taken off to prison they will mass and organize to rescue him.[30] Interestingly Ibn Battuta, who was in Egypt in the 1320s, reported the *ḥarāfīsh* massing to enforce the release from prison of one of their patrons, the amir Tashtamur Hummus Akhdar.[31] The (somewhat Masonic) practice of members looking after each other was taken to such an extreme that, according to al-Turkumani, a man might even prostitute his wife in order to support his needy brethren.

Equally reprehensible for the pious Muslim was the *futuwwa*'s un-Islamic initiation rite, which required the drinking of a cup of water and salt and featured another, even more dubious, practice by the group's elder, who stripped the blindfolded *amrad,* or beardless boy, and invested him with the trousers of *futuwwa.* The whole business of eyeing undressed and beardless boys was an abomination. As al-Turkumani put it, "the concupiscient glances of the older men are poisoned arrows from the quiver of Satan."[32] The homosexuality of the gaze was, according to him, as damnable as any other form of homosexuality. If members of *futuwwa* lodges did indeed sit and watch as beautiful youths were undressed before their eyes, then this practice may be linked to certain rather controversial Sufi meditation practices. In medieval Persia the religious contemplation of the unbearded was termed *shāhid bāzī,* or "witness play."[33]

However, to return to al-Turkumani's case against *futuwwa,* another aspect of the criminality of this sort of brotherhood was the readiness of its members to take up cudgels against the agents of the state *(ghulmān al-shurṭa wa-wulāt al-Muslimīn). Futuwwa* members prided themselves on their skill with weapons, but al-Turkumani piously observed that a true *fatā* should not be identified by his skill with a knife but rather by his generosity to the needy. A little later in 808, al-Turkumani produced a brief *risāla* wholly devoted to *futuwwa,* in which he noted that its apologists presented the deliverance of people from prison or from enforced legal penalties as a charitable activity: the big man *(al-kabīr)* marches along at the head of his following and says, "Deliver your brethren in *futuwwa,*" but the right reply to this is "Listen, O you of little courage *(muruwwa),* this is all the deceit of the devil *(talbīs Iblīs),* and his aim is to lead you away from the way of the Prophet."[34] *Futuwwa,* as al-Turkumani viewed it, was one of the worst *bidaʿ*s of the age, and he treated with brisk contempt its partisans' attempt to link it with caliphal *futuwwa.* The attempt to trace its lineage back to 'Ali was, if anything, even more outrageous. Al-Turkumani's discussion of *futuwwa* comes in the fifth *faṣl* of the *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ*.[35] It follows a chapter devoted to the evil of chess and precedes the one on the wickedness of brotherhoods devoted to hunting.

Al-Turkumani also wrote a short treatise devoted solely to attacking *futuwwa*, and this has a colophon testifying that it had been endorsed by Ibn Taymiyya and, allegedly, by all the muftis of Egypt.[36] Al-Turkumani had indeed studied under Ibn Taymiyya, and it is plausible that it was his teacher who had taught him to loathe *futuwwa*, for the latter had also issued a fatwa against the institution. In it, Ibn Taymiyya indicated that all sorts of vices might flourish in these meetings of young men. According to him, a *futuwwa* meeting was known as *majlis al-daskara*, or "session of the village." He added that *daskara* had been a neutral word, but in his time it acquired pejorative overtones, because it was applied to gatherings for the purpose of fornication, wine drinking, and singing.[37] The entry on *daskara* in Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon* offers the meaning, "a town or village," but two of the earlier definitions are more germane: "a building like a *qaṣr*, which is surrounded by houses, or chambers, and in which the vitious or immoral *(shuṭṭār)* assemble"; or "houses of the foreigners, *aʿājim*, in which are wine and instruments of music and the like."[38] Incidentally, al-Turkumani in his *Risāla* on *futuwwa* twice refers to the ritual of induction as a *tazkira*. Although Labib proposed emending this to *tadhkira*, another possibility is that *tazkira* represents a mishearing of *daskara*.

A fatwa by the fourteeth-century Aleppan Zayn 'Umar al-Din b. al-Wardi (1292–1349) echoed al-Turkumani's writings in denouncing the prominence of *liwāṭ*, or homosexuality, in *futuwwa*.[39] It is indeed easy to imagine that the *futuwwa*'s cult of the young man may in certain circumstances have become confused with a different sort of cult of beardless youths. A number of litterateurs in the Mamluk period, among them al-Badri and al-Nawaji, produced anthologies devoted to the joys of the beautiful boy. Al-Badri's was entitled "The Shining Dawn: On the Description of Fair Faces"; al-Nawaji, who died in 1455 and is better known for his anthology on wine-drinking, the *Halbat al-kumayt*, compiled at least two treatises on beautiful young men: "The Throwing-off of Shame in the Description of the First Growth of the Beard," and "The Prairie of the Gazelles in the Purity of the Beauty of Servant Boys." Mamluk moralists were also much vexed by the *mukhannath*, or transvestite prostitutes, who worked the streets.[40]

Ibn Taymiyya, al-Turkumani, and other Mamluk experts on *bidʿa* rejected the claim of members of popular *futuwwa* lodges that their chain of initiation could be traced back to the Abbasid caliph al-Nasir. In so doing, they denied any link between popular Cairene *futuwwa* of relatively recent date and the more respectable and longer-established *futuwwa* of the courts. On a related issue, studies of twelfth-century Iraqi *futuwwa* have suggested that one of al-Nasir's aims in promoting the institution was to reconcile Sunnism and moderate Shiʿism under its umbrella. The *futuwwa*'s slogan *Lā fatā illā ʿAlī* ('Ali is *the* youth par excellence) and its tracing its lineage of initiation back to 'Ali might be taken as hinting at Shiʿi aspects to the organization, and it is probably true that Shiʿism was more of a vital force in Mamluk Egypt than has hitherto been realized. However, as far as the Mamluk period and Mamluk sources are concerned, there is no real evidence to suggest that *futuwwa* was linked to Shiʿi sympathies or practices—and this was not one of Ibn al-Turkumani's or Ibn Taymiyya's grumbles. (Incidentally, Bulliet in his work on tenth-to-twelfth-century Nishapur found that members of *futuwwa*, when their affiliation was identifiable, were invariably Shafiʿite Muslims.[41])

Although Ibn Taymiyya and al-Turkumani went out of their way to denounce various aspects of *futuwwa*, Abu 'Abdallah b. al-Hajj al-Abdari (1336–66?), who similarly wrote a lengthy treatise on *bidʿa*, does not seem to have noticed the phenomenon at all. Ibn al-Hajj did deal disapprovingly with homosexuality, gazing on men, singing and dancing, various unacceptable Sufi rituals, and dodgy artisanal and commercial practices, but he does not discuss *futuwwa* (unless I have missed it). The evidence is too fragmentary and relies too much on the apparent silence of the sources for one to come to any firm conclusion here, but what this suggests is that popular, quasi-criminal, ritualized *futuwwa* was a phenomenon of limited duration in medieval Egypt. The *futuwwa*-loving Oirats had arrived at the end of the thirteenth century. Ibn Taymiyya and al-Turkumani lived and wrote at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century.[42] Gabriel Baer, who wrote several excellent studies of guilds in the Ottoman period, suggested that there was an essential continuity between medieval Egyptian *futuwwa* and the craft-based guilds of Egypt in the Ottoman period.[43] However, the supposed continuity is doubtful. I have come across no references to *futuwwa* in the Mamluk lands in the late fourteenth or the fifteenth century. Ibn al-Turkumani had urged the Mamluk authorities to ban *futuwwa*, and it is indeed possible that recommendations from him and other like-minded "ulema" were eventually heeded. A new wave of *futuwwa* manuscripts was produced in Egypt in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but, although al-Jabarti's *ʿAjāʾib*

al-āthār contains plentiful information about criminal activity and popular disturbances in Ottoman Egypt, the word *futuwwa* does not seem to be in the author's vocabulary. Compared to *futuwwa*, the brotherhood of the *harāfish* had a longer existence. The first reference to the *harāfish* was in 1298, but they were still a power to be reckoned with at least as late as 1516, when the shaykh of the *harāfish* accompanied Qansuh al-Ghuri on his ill-fated journey to Syria.[44]

Futuwwa seems to have been linked, however vaguely, with another and more long-lived phenomenon, one that at first blush would not appear urban at all: the hunting lodge. *Futuwwa* treatises written during the caliphate of al-Nasir had spelled out the hunting privileges of young men, giving them special license to hunt with crossbows and listing the *manāṣib*, or fourteen noble species of birds that they could honorably hunt.[45] According to Ibn Khaldun, the caliph was crazy about crossbows and pigeons.[46] With respect to the belt of *futuwwa*, Louis Massignon has observed that "it was a military belt worn by an archer, a '*tir-bent*,' an arrow belt, the insignia of the guild of 'couriers' (*shāṭir*, whence the Indian *shattar*, religious order, derives...)."[47]

It is noteworthy that, after al-Turkumani had finished discussing the wickedness of *futuwwa* lodges, he then immediately turned to the use of the crossbow. Hunting leagues that used the crossbow were reprehensible, according to him, because they were liable to break the Islamic law on slaughtering. The crossbow was cruel to birds and proscribed in Hadith. The *shuṭṭār* huntsmen were wicked because they valued marksmanship more than piety. They were also bad because they did not mind admitting into their ranks homosexual men—nor, for that matter, Jews and Christians. *Shuṭṭār* preferred to swear by the dirt, rather than by God. All that mattered to these awful people was the ability to kill certain birds—the *manāṣib* birds. If one succeeded, one was acclaimed a *shāṭir*. Their group solidarity and their unquestioning obedience to their leaders were also to be abominated. So was their trampling through other people's fields. Although a member of such a group is called a *shāṭir*, or cunning one, according to al-Turkumani, the only real cunning people are the good Muslims.[48] (Interestingly and curiously, Ibn Turkumani's aversion to companies of archers finds a parallel in the Western world in the fifteenth-century *Malleus Maleficarum*, whose authors, Krämer and Sprenger, wrote of "the witchcraft of archers." According to the famous inquisitors, such skill as certain crack archers possessed could only be explained by their having entered into a pact with the devil.[49] Also, more germanely with respect to Islamic archery's association with vice, the sixth chapter of al-Badri's treatise on beautiful boys was specifically devoted to archery and hunting and to the erotic prospects afforded by these activities.) Al-Turkumani's view that hunting with a crossbow was illicit was backed up, to some extent at least, by Ibn Mangli's fourteenth-century treatise on hunting, *Uns al-malā bi-wahsh al-falā*, in which the author states that it is forbidden to hunt and kill animals using blunt weapons or projectiles, such as the balls fired from a *bunduqa*.[50]

In medieval Arabic dictionaries, a *shāṭir* (plural: *shuṭṭār*) was defined as a wrongdoer, a clever thief, someone who is agile and witty or swift on his feet. But in the usage of al-Turkumani and other medieval Egyptian writers, the word was also quite specifically associated with hunting and the use of the bow. While a *shāṭir* and a *fatā* were not necessarily one and the same man, Ibn Taymiyya discussed *futuwwa* and assemblies of archers in one and the same disapproving breath. These are people, he claimed, who have taken an oath of infidelity, and who celebrate together with feasting.[51] It seems that they formed gangs, somewhat similar to the Mohawks of eighteenth-century London or the Apaches of Paris in the 1920s. If the adherents of *futuwwa* excelled with the knife, the *shuṭṭār* were more versatile, being enthusiasts also of single-stick fencing and wrestling as well as archery. In the early fourteenth century the sports and enthusiasms of the *shuṭṭār* and like-minded wastrels briefly enjoyed court favor under Sultan al-Muzaffar Hajji (r. 1346–47). This young sultan enjoyed watching the single-stick fencing of the *awbāsh* (riffraff). He gambled on racing pigeons and donned leather breeches in order to wrestle with servants and lowlife types. (His other enthusiasms were polo and torture.)[52]

In the folk epic devoted to Baybars, which we have already mentioned, Baybars as a young mamluk was initiated into a hunting lodge in Damascus with the assistance of Fatima bint al-Awqasi, daughter of the bowyer, after he had proved himself by shooting at the *manāṣib* birds with a crossbow. The corporation of archers to which he was admitted was under the leadership of a shaykh and a *naqīb*; it had forty members and was dedicated to hunting the ten noble breeds of bird. On the day of the hunt, each sub-group of four archers was assigned one particular breed to hunt. After this first round, the winner—in the *Sīra*, the winner was of course Baybars—then had to use his crossbow to bring down forty birds, four from each species. The

anonymous author concluded his account of Baybars's prowess as an archer with the lament that those were the days when people preferred hunting to games of tric-trac or dominoes.[55]

The above was fiction, and moreover fiction from Ottoman Syria, but it may well reflect medieval realities. Historically, such jolly huntsmen may have been capable of providing sizable armed militias in times of crisis. When in 1524 Ahmad al-Kha'in, the Turkish governor of Egypt, rebelled against Istanbul, he called upon the support of the *zu"ar* and *shuṭṭār* to help him dislodge the janissaries from the Citadel of Cairo. According to the geomancer and historical romancer Ibn Zunbul, the two leaders of the *shuṭṭār*, Shaban al-Shaghari, Head of the Bowyers, and Ahmad al-Shirbini chose from their followers a squad to enter the Citadel by an underground passage and so come upon the janissaries unawares. Later on, when the Ottomans launched a counteroffensive, Ibn Zunbul tells us that the *shuṭṭār*, along with the *zu"ar*, the riffraff, and every dog and his brother, were among the last of the rebel's supporters.[54]

The tales of *The Thousand and One Nights* teem with with *shuṭṭār* who get into scrapes but who, being infinitely resourceful, use artful dodges to get themselves out of those scrapes.[55] Some of the *shuṭṭār* featured in the *Nights*, such as Crafty Delilah or Calamity Ahmad, had epics in their own right devoted to them in medieval Egypt. Ali Zaybaq was the most famous of the *shuṭṭār* to feature in the *Nights*. In a historico-literary analysis of "The Adventures of Mercury Ali of Cairo," André Miquel has suggested that in this story, notionally set in Harun al-Rashid's Baghdad, Ali, who eventually wins the caliph's admiration and his blessing on Ali's marriage to Delilah's daughter Zaynab, is in some sort of metaphorical sense being inducted into Iraqi *futuwwa*.[56] Other *shuṭṭār* were specifically immortalized (or should that be "immoralized"?) in some of the stories added to later Egyptian recensions of *Alf layla wa-layla*, among them, "The Sharper of Alexandria and the Chief of Police," "The Chief of Qus Police and the Sharper," "The Simpleton and Sharper," "The Tale of the Sharpers with the Shroff and his Ass," and "The Story of the Three Sharpers." Not all *shuṭṭār* were all that sharp. Several stories indeed are devoted to their stupidity—stupidity heightened in some cases by drugs. And there is evidence that at least one real villain in fifteenth-century Egypt took to calling himself after the fictional Ahmad al-Danaf, or Calamity Ahmad. He was executed in 1485.[57] In Cairo the legendary villains enjoyed the status of Robin Hood or Dick Turpin. The cult of such fictional "heroic" villains can be seen as a later and more vulgar version of the cult of crime and lowlife that was such a striking feature of the culture of the literary elite in Buyid Iraq, as represented by, for example, the tenth-century vizier and patron of Abu Dulaf, al-Sahib b. ʿAbbad.[58] Moreover, the cult of the criminal can, of course, be traced further back yet, to the semi-legendary lives of the *saʿālīk* poets of pre-Islamic Arabia.

As noted above, the caliph al-Nasir li-Din Allah had been an enthusiast for *futuwwa*, hunting with the crossbow, and pigeons. Like crossbow hunting, pigeon fancying could have disreputable undertones in medieval Islamic society, and indeed pigeon racing was condemned by most religious authorities. A pigeon racer could not bear witness in a court. According to its enemies, pigeon racing was invented by the citizens of Sodom (so the sport is of some antiquity);[59] professed pigeon fanciers used the excuse of pursuing errant pigeons to break into houses or to spy upon women from the rooftops. It was also forbidden to hunt pigeons, since it was not *halāl* to consume them. According to al-Jahiz's treatise on animals, the rearing and flying of pigeons was a privilege of *fityān*.[60] In *The Thousand and One Nights* story, "The Rogueries of Delilah the Crafty and Her Daughter Zaynab the Cony-Catcher," Crafty Delilah's father had been the caliph's master of carrier pigeons, and eventually Delilah is awarded the same post. In another story, "The Adventures of Mercury ʿAli of Cairo," ʿAli pretends to have eaten Delilah's pigeons. So, to begin to conclude, one finds a skein of ill-defined yet indubitable connections between the young men involved in pigeon fancying, crime, hunting, boy-ogling, and the rituals of brotherhood.

Such lowlife denizens of Cairo's poorer quarters can be seen as marginal figures—as subversives and representatives of a counterculture. However, it is doubtful that this was their own perspective on the matter, for their gangs and associations played a central role in the functioning of the city. As far as most of the inhabitants of Cairo's *ḥāras* were concerned, it may be that it was the Mamluk elite whom they perceived as the marginal men and the representatives of an alien counterculture. The defense of poor and humble citizens from the oppression of the alien Turkish soldiery was surely one of the most important roles of *futuwwa* lodges and similar groups.

This study concentrated on the *futuwwa* and *shuṭṭār* groups, but al-Husayniyya and the Bab al-Luq teemed

with other *"hushrāt,"* or "human vermin." I have said little about the *zu"ar* and the *harāfish* (for these ruffians have been well studied by Brinner and Lapidus). I have said nothing at all about the *ju'aydiyya,* or Curly-Haired Ones (possibly a confederation of Gypsy toughs: remarkably little work has been done on the Gypsies in the medieval Near East). According to a footnote in Quatremère's *Histoire des sultans mamlouks,* Tenreiro claimed that Gypsies (*Bohemiens*) were called in Arabic "Xatres," plausibly *shāṭir,* plural: *shuṭṭār.*[61] Nor have I had time to research and discuss the *tawwābūn,* or repentant bandits who turned "sultan's evidence" and became policemen. Nor have I discussed the subdivisions of the Banu Sasan, as listed in al-Zarkhuri's conjuring manual—including the *Aṣḥāb al-Mīm* (or professional treasure hunters), the false ascetics, the Halwati snake-charmers, and the Saramiti occultists.[62] Yet the lives of all these strange people deserve at least a footnote in the turbulent history of Cairo.

NOTES

1. Shāfi' b. 'Alī, *Faḍl al-Ma'thūr,* Oxford, Bodleian MS Marsh 424, fol. 94b. This is the third of three *tadhkiras* addressed to Qalawun's son al-Salih in Shafi' b. 'Ali's life of Qalawun. It was translated in part (with no indication of the source) in D. S. Margoliouth, *Cairo, Jerusalem, and Damascus* (London, 1907), p. 79. For another *tadhkira* from the same period, see Ibn al-Furāt, *Tā'rīkh al-duwal wa al-mulūk,* ed. Q. Zurayk (Beirut, 1942), vol. 7, pp. 196–200. It dates from 679/1281 and was drafted by Ibn al-Mukarram. The *tadhkira* in Ibn al-Furat's chronicle emphasizes the need to police Husayniyya, but does not actually mention halls of *futuwwa.* The following works discuss the 679 *tadhkira* as given in Ibn al-Furat: Linda Northrup, *From Slave to Sultan: The Career of al-Mansur Qalawun and the Consolidation of Mamluk Rule in Egypt and Syria (679–689 A.H. / 1279–1290 A.D.),* Freiburger Islamstudien, vol. 18 (Stuttgart, 1998), pp. 209–10; Léonor Fernandes, "On Conducting the Affairs of State: A Guideline of the Fourteenth Century," *Annales Islamologiques,* vol. 24 (1988), pp. 81–91; and Sato Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam* (Leiden, 1981), pp. 105–23. Axel Moberg, "Regierungspromemoria eines ägyptischen Sultans," in *Festschrift Sachau,* ed. Gotthold Weill (Berlin, 1915), pp. 406–21, translated and commented on the first of the three *tadhkiras* in *Fadl al-Ma'thūr,* fols. 82b–89b; see Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (Beckenham, Kent, 1986), pp. 72–73.
2. J. von Hammer-Purgstall, "Sur la chevalerie des arabes antérieure à celle de l'Europe, et sur l'influence de la première sur la seconde," *Journal Asiatique,* 4th series, vol. 13 (1849), pp. 5–14.
3. A. N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon (1250–1900)* (London, 1939), p. 15.
4. Étienne Quatremère, ed., *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte, écrite en arabe par Taki-Eddin-Ahmed-Makrizi,* 2 vols. (Paris, 1845), vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 58–59n.
5. On the Iranian tradition, see Morteza Saraf, ed., *Traités des compagnons-chevaliers* (Tehran and Paris, 1973) (Persian text with analytical introduction in French by Henri Corbin); Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism* (London, 1989), pp. 91–92; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Spiritual Chivalry," in *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations* , ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (London, 1991), pp. 304–15.
6. Georges Duby, "Au XIIe siècle: les Jeunes," *Annales, économies, societés, civilisations* 5 (1964): 835–46.
7. On this sort of *futuwwa* in general, and on *futuwwa* in Anatolia more specifically, see F. Taeschner, *Zunfte und Bruderschaften im Islam* (Zurich, 1979).
8. Angelika Hartmann, *Al-Nasir li-Din Allah (1180–1225)* (Berlin, 1975), pp. 92–135; Herbert Mason, *Two Statesmen of Mediaeval Islam: Vizir Ibn Hubayra (499–560 AH/1105–1165 AD) and Caliph an-Nâṣir li Dîn Allâh (553–622 AH/1158–1225 AD)* (The Hague, 1972), pp. 118–26; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Spiritual Chivalry," pp. 304–15.
9. See, for an example of this, R. S. Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols* (New York, 1977), p. 138.
10. On courtly *futuwwa* under the Mamluks, see Taeschner, *Zunfte und Bruderschaften im Islam,* pp. 219–25; idem, "Die islamischen Futuwwabünde: das Problem, ihrer Entstehung und die Grundlinien ihrer Geschichte," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,* n.s. vol. 12 (1934): 38–39.
11. Martin Hinds and El-Said Badawi, *A Dictionary of Egyptian Arabic, Arabic-English* (Beirut, 1986), p. 641.
12. Sawsan al-Messiri, "The Changing Role of *Futuwwa* in the Social Structure of Cairo," in Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury, eds., *Patrons and Clients* (London, 1977), pp. 239–53.
13. Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1967), p. 179.
14. Robert Irwin, "Hoodlums, Harlots, and Holy Men," *Washington Post Book World* (April 10, 1994): 10.
15. *Mahfouz par Mahfouz: Entretiens avec Gamal Ghitany* (Paris, 1991), pp. 25, 54–56, 61–62.
16. Mahfouz, interviewed in *al-Musawwar* (October 21, 1988): 10-19, 68–73; quoted in Rasheed El-Enany, *Naguib Mahfouz: The Pursuit of Meaning* (London, 1993), p. 3.
17. Yves Thoraval, *Regards sur le cinéma égyptien 1875–1975* (Paris, 1988), pp. 62–63; Magda Wassaf, ed., *Égypte, 100 ans de cinéma* (Paris, 1995), pp. 151–52; Viola Shafik, *Arab Cinema: History and Cultural Identity* (Cairo, 1998), pp. 135–37.
18. Hashim al-Nahas, "The Role of Naguib Mahfouz in the Egyptian Cinema," in *Critical Perspectives on Naguib Mahfouz,* ed. Trevor Le Gassick (Washington, 1991), pp. 166–67.
19. Lizbeth Malkmus and Roy Armes, *Arab and African Film Making* (London, 1991), pp. 101–2.
20. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities,* pp. 176, 293; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The North-Eastern Extension of Cairo under the Mamluks," *Annales Islamologiques* 17 (1981): 157–89; Jonathan Bloom, "The Mosque of Baybars al-Bunduqdari in Cairo," *Annales Islamologiques* 18 (1982): 45–78.
21. William M. Brinner, "The Significance of the Harafish and Their Sultan," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 6 (1963): 190–215.

24. Georges Bohas and Jean-Patrick Guillaume, trans., *Roman de Baïbars*, 10 vols. (Arles, 1985): vol. 1, *Les enfances de Baïbars*.
25. On Khidr, the disreputable holy man, see E. [Ashtor] Strauss, "Sheich Hidr: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Juden in Damaskus," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 44 (1937): 97–40; P. M. Holt, "An Early Source on Shaykh Khadir al-Mihrani," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 46 (1983): 35–39.
26. Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Maqrizi, *Kitāb al-mawā'iz wa 'l-i'tibār fi dhikr al-khitat wa 'l-āthār* (henceforth *Khitat*), 2 vols. (Cairo: Būlāq, 1853–54), vol. 2, pp. 22–23.
27. On Husayniyya, see Behrens-Abouseif, "North-Eastern Extension of Cairo." On Baybars's mosque there, see Bloom, "Mosque of Baybars al-Bunduqdari."
28. On the butcher shaykh of the Bayumiyya, see Thomas Philip and Moshe Perlmann, trans., *'Abd al-Rahmān al-Jabarti's History of Egypt*, 4 vols. (Stuttgart, 1994): vol. 2, p. 311; also see André Raymond, "Quartiers et mouvements populaires," in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P. M. Holt (London, 1968), pp. 106–7.
29. Philip, *al-Jabarti's History*, vol. 3, pp. 42, 216, 249; Raymond, "Quartiers," p. 116.
30. Al-Maqrizi, *Khitat*, vol. 2, pp. 22–23.
31. David Ayalon, "The Great Yasa of Chingiz Khan, a Reexamination: (A) The Basic Data in the Islamic Sources on the Yasa and on Its Contents," *Studia Islamica* 33 (1971): 118; "The Great Yasa: (C1) The Position of the Yasa in the Mamluk Sultanate," *Studia Islamica* 36 (1972): 134–35.
32. Idris b. Baydakin al-Turkumāni al-Hanafi, *Kitāb al-luma' fi 'l-hawādith wa 'l-bida'*, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo: Quellen zur Geschichte des Islamischen Ägyptens, vol. 3a, ed. Subhi Labib (Wiesbaden, 1986): see editor's Arabic introduction, pp. 54–62, and text, pp. 113–24; cf. Joseph Schacht, "Einige Kairiner Handschriften über furusiya und futuwa," *Der Islam* 19 (1931): 49–52.
33. Ibn Battūta, *The Travels of Ibn Battūta, A.D. 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (Cambridge, England: Hakluyt Society, 1958), 2nd series, no. 110, vol. 1, p. 54. See also Brinner, "The Significance of the Harāfish," p. 197.
34. Al-Turkumāni, *Kitāb al-Luma'*, p. 114.
35. Peter Lamborn Wilson, "The Witness Game: Imaginal Yoga and Sacred Pedophilia in Persian Sufism," in *Scandal: Essays in Islamic Heresy* (New York, 1988), pp. 93–121.
36. Al-Turkumāni, *Kitāb al-Luma'*, vol. 3a, pp. 501–20 (appendix: al-Turkumāni's *Risāla on futuuwa*).
37. Al-Turkumāni, *Kitāb al-luma'*, pp. 113–24.
38. Al-Turkumāni, *Kitāb al-luma'*, p. 501 (appendix).
39. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'at al-rasā'il* (Cairo, 1905), pp. 147–60.
40. Edward William Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Cambridge, England: Islamic Texts Society, 1984), p. 879. For the first of the two earlier meanings, Lane relied on the commentary to the second Paris edition of al-Hariri's *Maqāmāt*, and, for the second, he cited the medieval Arab dictionary, *Qāmūs al-muhit*.
41. Ignaz Goldziher, "Eine Fetwa gegen die Futuwwa," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 73 (1919): 127–28.
42. Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1943–49), vol. 2, p. 132; Franz Rosenthal, "Male and Female: Described and Compared," in *Homoeroticism in Classical Arabic Literature*, ed. J. W. Wright Jr. and Everett K. Rowson (New York, 1997), pp. 34–37, 50–51; Muhammad b. Hasan al-Nawāji, *La prairie des gazelles: Éloge des beaux adolescents*, trans. R. Khawam (Paris, 1989). See also, Geert Jan van Gelder, "A Muslim Encomium on Wine: *The Racecourse of the Boy (Halbat al-kumayt)* by al-Nawāǧī (d. 859/1455) as a Post-classical Arabic Work," *Arabica* 42 (1975): 222–26; Everett K. Rowson, "Two Homoerotic Narratives from Mamluk Literature: al-Safadī's *Law'at al-shākī* and Ibn Dāniyāl's *al-Mutayyam*," in Wright, *Homoeroticism*, pp. 158–91.
43. Richard Bulliet, *The Patricians of Nishapur: A Study in Medieval Islamic Social History* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), pp. 43–45.
44. On al-Turkumāni's dates, see *Kitāb al-luma'*, "Einleitung," pp. 15–16.
45. Gabriel Baer, "Guilds in Middle Eastern History," in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, ed. M. A. Cook (London, 1970), pp. 16–17, 20.
46. Brinner, "Significance of the Harāfish."
47. Mason, *Two Statesmen*, pp. 118, 120.
48. Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-'ibar*, 7 vols. (Cairo: Būlāq, 1867), vol. 3, p. 535; cf. Douglas Patton, *Badr al-Din Lu'lu': Atabeg of Mosul, 1211–1259* (Seattle, 1991), pp. 49–50.
49. Louis Massignon, *The Passion of Hallaj, Mystic and Martyr of Islam*, trans. Herbert Mason (Princeton, 1982), p. 621.
50. Al-Turkumāni, *Kitāb al-luma'*, pp. 125–33.
51. Heinrich Krâmer and Jacobus Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum* (Nurenburg, 1494) pt. 2, chap. 16.
52. Ibn Mangli, *De la chasse*, trans. François Viré (Paris, 1984), p. 32.
53. Joseph Schacht, "Zwei neue Quellen zur Kenntnis der Futuwa," in *Festschrift Georg Jacob*, ed. Theodor Menzel (Leipzig, 1932), pp. 283–84.
54. Yūsuf b. Taghribirdi, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fi mulūk Misr wa 'l-Qāhira* (Cairo, 1929–72), vol. 10, pp. 128, 168–9; Franz Rosenthal, *Gambling in Islam* (Leiden, 1975), p. 54; Irwin, *Middle East in the Middle Ages*, p. 134.
55. Bohas, *Les Enfances du Baïbars*, pp. 149–55.
56. Ahmad b. Zunbul al-Rammāl al-Mahalli, *Kitāb tā'rikh waqā'a al-ghawri*, British Library MS. Or 2811, fols. 82a–86b.
57. On this sort of material, see Victor Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux Arabes publiés dans l'Europe chrétienne de 1810 à 1885*, 12 vols. (Liège, 1892–1922), vol. 5, pp. 245–50; Heinrich Schützinger, "Die Schelmengeschichten in Tausendundeiner Nacht als Ausdruck der ägyptischen Volksmeinung," *Rheinische Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, vol. 21 (1973), pp. 200–215; Boaz Shoshan, "Comedy, Pornography, and Social Critique in the Romance of Ahmad Danaf," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 27 (1996): 216–26.
58. André Miquel, 'Alī az-Zi'baq et quelques autres aigrefins," in idem, *Sept contes des Mille et Une Nuits, ou Il n'y a pas de contes innocents* (Paris, 1981), p. 65.
59. Miquel, *Sept Contes*, p. 63.
60. On Abu Dulaf and similar literary connoisseurs of crime, see vol. 1 of Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld: The Banu Sasan in Arabic Society and Literature*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1976).
61. Ignaz Goldziher, "On the Development of Hadith," in idem, *Muslim Studies*, trans. C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern, 2 vols. (London, 1971), vol. 2, pp. 74–75; Rosenthal, *Gambling in Islam*, pp. 51–55.

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60. Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāhiz, *Kitāb al-Hayawān*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām M. Hārūn, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1965–69), vol. 2, p. 157; vol. 3, p. 20.
61. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks*, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 50–51, n. 4.
62. The lowlife of medieval Cairo is briefly discussed, however, in Robert Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (London, 1994), pp. 140–58.

XXII

Ibn Zunbul and the romance of history

Sir Lewis Namier, the prosopographic historian of Hanoverian Britain, once observed that 'historians imagine the past and remember the future'.[1] By this he meant that our own version of history – Whig, Marxist, or whatever it may be – will constantly be rewritten in the light of what direction we perceive our culture and society to be taking. Although Namier intended his aphorism to apply to all historians in all periods, there can be few if any historians to whom it more closely applies than Shaykh Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Zunbul al-Rammāl al-Maḥallī al-Shāfi'ī, a man who wrote about the past, but who earned a living by foretelling the future.

A case can be made for considering Ibn Zunbul as the Arab world's first true historical novelist. The European historical novel is conventionally thought to have begun with the romances of Sir Walter Scott, while Jurjī Zaydān's *al-Mamlūk al-Sharīd* ('The Fleeing Mamluk'), written under the influence of Sir Walter Scott and published in 1891, is generally held to be the first example of an historical novel written in Arabic. Nevertheless the production of historical novels in the Arab world has been pushed back centuries earlier by at least one scholar. In his *History of Muslim Historiography* Franz Rosenthal discussed such works as the popular epics *Sīrat 'Antar* and *Sīrat Banī Hilāl* as if they were historical novels. He quoted the autobiography of a twelfth-century figure, al-Samaw'āl ibn Yaḥyā al-Maghribī, on how as a youth he had read the 'big novels, such as the stories of 'Antar, Dû l-Himma and al-Baṭṭâl,[2] the story of Alexander Dû l-Qarnayn,[3] of al-'Anqâ' (the Phoenix), and Ṭaraf b. Lûḏân, and others'. Al-Samaw'āl moved on from such light and fanciful material to reading history in Arabic and, in the end, his reading persuaded him to convert from Judaism to Islam.[4]

However, it is questionable whether the fantastic sagas read by al-Samaw'āl, or similar later works such as the *Sīrat al-Ẓāhir Baybars* and the pseudo-religious romances of al-Bakrī, should really be counted as historical novels.[5] There may be history, or at least what pretends to be history, in all of such works, yet they fail to meet the criteria set out some decades ago by Georg Lukacs. In *The Historical Novel* (1937), he argued that, in genuine historical novels, the books' protagonists take part in historical events and are changed by them. Moreover, in reading such fictions, one comes to a better understanding of the past and the processes of historical change. It is very doubtful whether those fantastic sagas composed in

the Arab world in the medieval period do conform to Lukacs's criteria. However, it will be argued in what follows that Ibn Zunbul's narrative of the downfall of the Mamluk Sultanate at the hands of the Ottomans does at least come close to satisfying a discriminating judge of historical novels.[6]

Judging by the number of manuscripts of his *Infiṣāl* which have survived, Ibn Zunbul used to be a popular author.[7] However, few people seem to read him nowadays. He does not even have an entry in the new (second) edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* or the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. Ibn Zunbul's current neglect may be the result of a category error. Western scholars have tended to treat his narrative masterpiece as a work of history rather than of historical fiction. According to David Ayalon in *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Medieval Society* (1956), the 'evidence gathered from Ibn Zunbul's work shows beyond any shadow of a doubt that by far the most important cause of the Mamluk defeat was the Ottoman use of firearms'.[8] In general, the arguments advanced in Ayalon's monograph rely heavily on citations from Ibn Zunbul. More recently, Benjamin Lellouch has written of Ibn Zunbul as being in the employ of the penultimate Mamluk Sultan Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī, and as a historian who was an eyewitness of the Mamluk defeats in 1516–17 and of the consequent Ottoman occupation of Egypt.[9]

As we shall see, there are many reasons for doubting Ibn Zunbul's reliability as a historian, and there are strong grounds for doubting that he was ever in the service of Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī (r. 1501–16). Relying on a passage early on in the chronicle (if indeed the text in question should be termed a 'chronicle'), Lellouch has deduced that Ibn Zunbul was the Sultan's geomancer. However, Ibn Zunbul does not actually identify himself as being that geomancer.[10] The pattern of Ibn Zunbul's real life can be deduced only from occasional references in his own works. As we shall see, the *Infiṣāl*'s narrative runs up to 1559. In his *Qānūn*, a treatise on geography and astronomy, Ibn Zunbul refers to a dream which prefigured the assassination of the Ottoman governor of Egypt, Maḥmūd Pasha (which took place in 1567).[11] In his cosmography, the *Tuhfa*, he not only refers to himself as having been in Abukir in 1544, but he also makes mention of a conversation that he had with a Spaniard in AH 981/AD 1573–4.[12] It follows that he would have had to have been improbably long-lived to have served Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī in any capacity.

I have not been able to determine when Ibn Zunbul was born, but it seems probable that he was born in Maḥalla in the Delta *c.*1500. Maḥalla's many excellences are duly celebrated in Ibn Zunbul's *Tuhfa*.[13] He could well have witnessed the entry of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I ('the Grim') into Cairo in 1517, for his account of this is vivid, detailed and realistic.[14] He claims to have been an eyewitness of the arrival of the defeated rebel Pasha Aḥmad al-Khā'in (Aḥmad 'the Traitor') in Maḥalla in 1524.[15] Much of his subsequent life seems to have been spent in the employ of Maḥmūd Pasha, whom he served as a dream interpreter and, presumably, geomancer (whence his title of 'al-Rammāl').[16] However, he probably earned extra money by writing books.

Ibn Zunbul wrote several treatises on geomancy, most notably *Kitāb al-Maqālāt fī Ḥall al-Mushkilāt fī 'Ilm al-Raml* ('Treatise on the Solution of Problems in the Science of Geomancy'), a highly sophisticated work in which, incidentally, Ibn Zunbul reveals a strong interest in mnemonics (*fann taqwiyat al-ḥāfiẓa*).[17] His treatise on cosmography, *Tuhfat al-Mulūk wa al-Raghā'ib li mā fi al-Barr wa al-Baḥr min al-'Ajā'ib wa al-Gharā'ib* ('Gift of Kings and Object of Desires for what is on Land and Sea of the Marvellous and Strange') is a compendium of marvels indeed, dealing with buried treasures, talismanic statues, monsters, bogus Pharaonic lore and cosmic speculations. His *al-Qānūn wa al-Dunyā* ('Law and the World') is devoted to astronomy and geography and quotes heavily from apocryphal prophecies of Daniel.[18] He also wrote several works which have not survived, including a treatise on the *zā'irja* (a fortune-telling device whose use the great philosopher-historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) had once studied intensively),[19] and another treatise on the Mahdī, the leader who will come to guide the faithful at the End of Time, and eschatological *malāḥim* prophecies. The sixteenth-century Near East was more than usually preoccupied with apocalyptic prophecy. The wars between great empires and the successive falls of the Kingdom of Granada, the Aqqoyunlu empire[20] and the Mamluk Sultanate were part of the background to the production of handbooks of prophecy attributed to the mystic Ibn al-'Arabī (560–638/1165–1241) and others.[21]

Ibn Zunbul's historical novel exists in several versions, including two variant printed editions, and it can be considered as constituting a family of closely related versions rather than a single text. The numerous surviving manuscripts bear various titles, but in the *Tuhfa* Ibn Zunbul himself referred to his historical work as *Kitāb Infiṣāl Dawlat al-Awān wa Ittiṣāl Dawlat Banī 'Uthmān* ('The Departure of the Temporal Dynasty and the Coming of the Ottomans').[22] Ibn Zunbul's combination of the profession of novelist and occultist is not quite unique. In Mamluk Egypt a member of the low-life Fa'alātī clan doubled as a seller of astrological prognostications and a street-corner storyteller.[23] In the West in modern times novelists like Bulwer Lytton and Gustav Meyrink dabbled in occultism, while occultists such as Aleister Crowley and Dion Fortune also turned their hands to writing novels.[24]

The *Infiṣāl* begins with the advance of the penultimate Mamluk Sultan Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī out of Egypt to encounter defeat at the hand of Selim on the battlefield of Marj Dābiq. However, there are numerous flashbacks in the narrative. One of the most interesting of these is the – surely apocryphal – story of a Maghribi – a Muslim from North Africa – who arrived with a gun at the court of Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī and argued before the Sultan that the Mamluks would be doomed unless they adopted the weapon. But the Sultan allegedly rejected the monstrous device as Christian and declared that he would continue to follow the *sunna* (or custom) of the Prophet.[25] Ibn Zunbul goes on to tell the story of Selim's occupation of Syria and his invasion of Egypt, the Battle of Raydāniyya, the hunting down of the last Mamluk Sultan, Ṭūmānbāy, in 1517, and the history of the early Ottoman Pashas of Egypt. Different manuscripts of the *Infiṣāl* end at

different points. The modern editor 'Āmir's text ends with the governorship of 'Alī Pasha al-Ṭawāshī ('the eunuch'), who arrived in Egypt in 1559.[26]

Ibn Zunbul's novel is dedicated to the melancholy themes of the passing of chivalry and the doom of dynasties. The author's emotional sympathies clearly lie with the doomed Mamluk chivalry. However, he also stresses the justice of the Ottoman cause and Selim's strong piety. To borrow and paraphrase from Sellar and Yeatman's *1066 and All That* (on Cavaliers and Roundheads), the Mamluks were 'wrong but romantic', while the Ottomans were 'right but repulsive'. The *Infiṣāl* possesses a strong cast of individually drawn characters. The saintly and chivalrous Ṭūmānbāy is the hero. The real villains are not so much the Ottomans, but rather those Mamluks, such as Khayrbak and Jānbirdī al-Ghazālī, who collaborated with them. Aḥmad, the traitor Pasha who in 1523 sought to rally disaffected Mamluks against the Ottomans, is another villain in Ibn Zunbul's book. Betrayal of trust is the ultimate sin. The Ottoman Sultan Selim is portrayed as grim and mean-minded, yet he respects his Mamluk adversaries and he possesses skill in *firāsa* (divination on the basis of physiognomy) which allows him to descry what is truly in men's souls.[27]

Compared with conventional historians of the Mamluk period, Ibn Zunbul shows an unusual interest in the motivations of the protagonists, and he goes to great pains to make those motivations clear, often resorting to invented dialogue to do so. The fact that the narrative makes frequent use of dialogue suggests that Ibn Zunbul composed his work with oral delivery in mind. The dialogue is vigorous, even (as we shall see) occasionally obscene. The encounters between protagonists are often agonistic and boastful. The frequent recapitulations of the story so far and the care in signalling scene changes suggest that the *Infiṣāl* was designed to be performed in public rather than read in private. (In much the same way, in the nineteenth century, Dickens designed his novels to be read aloud.) The *Infiṣāl* also shares many of its stock themes – the council, the gathering of the army, the challenge, and the despoiling of the vanquished – with the *Iliad*,[28] and of course with heroic accounts of the early Islamic conquests.[29]

Granted all this, why, nevertheless, should the *Infiṣāl* be described as a 'novel' rather than as inaccurate history – or, to be less pejorative, literary history? The literarization of history writing is, after all, a striking and well-studied aspect of the Mamluk period. In a series of seminal studies, Ulrich Haarmann has pointed to a number of literary features in the chronicles of Ibn al-Dawādārī and others, including the insertion of anecdotes, resort to direct speech, the inclusion of *'ajā'ib* (marvels and marvellous happenings) and, more specifically, the use of occult materials and Turkish legends, as well as borrowings from *Volksroman* and the employment of dialect and popular idioms.[30] Qirṭāy al-'Izzī al-Khāzindārī, a thirteenth-century chronicler, inserted wholly fictitious episodes in what is otherwise an averagely dull chronicle. His inventions included battles, embassies and descriptions of foreign lands. There appears to be no obvious motive for his fabrications.[31] Ibn Ṣaṣrā, the author of a fourteenth-century local chronicle of Damascus, glossed his narrative of warfare and local politics with fables and proverbs.[32] In an earlier period and at a more sophisticated level, al-Mas'ūdī's

(d. 345/956) *Murūj al-Dhahab* ('The Meadows of Gold') can be read for pleasure as well as instruction. for it is both a chronicle and a work of *adab*.[33]

The *Infiṣāl*, however, is unusual in its readiness to sacrifice factual accuracy to narrative drive. 'Yes, O dear yes – the novel tells a story.'[34] The *Infiṣāl* conforms to many of E. M. Forster's prescriptions for the novel in its passion, its romanticism, its interest in character and dialogue, its taste for showing rather than telling, its use of dramatic incident and its ability to paint verbal pictures. (This last is most notable in Ibn Zunbul's account of Selim's entry into Cairo.) Forster himself experienced some difficulty in separating fiction from history, but he declared:

> It is the function of the novelist to reveal the hidden life at its source: to tell us more about Queen Victoria than could be known; and thus to produce a character who is not the Queen Victoria of history.[35]

Ibn Zunbul treats Selim and Selim's officers and opponents in just this manner. He reads their minds (very much as an expert in *firāsa* might) and he demonstrates how their characters shaped their thoughts and how their thoughts and decisions had consequences in history.

Occultism features in both the incidental props of the novel and in its broad themes. It was Ibn Zunbul's *déformation professionnelle*. Early on in the story, Qānṣawh learned that he would meet his downfall at the hands of a man whose name began with the letter *sīn*.[36] Qānṣawh took this prophecy to refer to the powerful *amīr*, Sībāy, the Mamluk governor of Syria, and did not take heed of the fact that Selim's name also began with a *sīn*. (This ancient storytelling motif also appears in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, where Edward IV, warned of a man whose name began with G, directed his fears towards George of Clarence rather than Richard of Gloucester.) The point of this story-motif (in both Arabic chronicle and Tudor play) is that it is to a degree a self-fulfilling prophecy. Ibn Zunbul's narrative implies that Qānṣawh's downfall was in part due to his unreasonable distrust of the loyal Sībāy. In his chronicle *Badā'i' al-Ẓuhūr*, Ibn Iyās, who was born about half a century before Ibn Zunbul in 852/1448, had previously made use of this same story-motif but applied it to a slightly earlier period. According to Ibn Iyās, soothsayers had told al-'Ādil Ṭūmānbāy (Ṭūmānbāy I, r. 906/1501) that he would be overthrown by someone whose name began with *qāf*. Ṭūmānbāy decided that this pointed to the *amīr* Qaṣrawh, yet in the event he was overthrown by Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī.[37] The ironical deployment of prophecy in history goes back at least to Herodotus's *History*, in which misreadings of the ambiguities of the Delphic Oracle lead many to their doom. The 'he-who-seeks-to-avoid-his-fate-seals-his-fate' motif could also be called the 'appointment-in-Samarra' motif, from the appearance of this theme in Arabic folklore and in the John O'Hara novel of that title.[38]

As has been noted earlier, Selim features in the story as a man with occult skills. He can read men's minds through his ability at *firāsa*, and thus he detects the deceits of Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī, as well as detecting the intrinsic nobility of Ṭūmānbāy. (The power of *firāsa* is a leading feature in the stories of 'The King

Who Kenned the Quintessence of Things' and 'The Three Sons of the King of the Yemen' in the *Thousand and One Nights*.)[39] Selim can also understand the real and hidden meanings of the letters of the alphabet. The *Infiṣāl* presents sixteenth-century Egypt as a magical land. Khayrbak, the Mamluk turncoat in attendance on Selim, urges his new master on by encouraging references to prophecies (*malāḥim*) and signs (*rumūz*).[40] The rebel Mamluk *amīr* Aynāl possesses a skullcap of invisibility (*'araqiyya masrūda*). Its possession does him no good.[41] (In many stories invisibility and ill-fate are closely linked as, for example, in Wagner's *Ring* cycle, H. G. Wells's *The Invisible Man* and J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.)[42]

More broadly, the practice of adumbration, of foreshadowing the end early on in the narrative, goes back to Homer. A narrative in which fate and foreknowledge play a large part is also likely to carry a freight of dramatic irony – as when, for example, former comrades-in-arms fall to fighting each other. For example, the *amīr* Jānbirdī, disguised as an Arab, enagages the Sultan Ṭūmānbāy in single combat without recognizing him (like Sohrab and Rustam or Lancelot and Galahad).[43] Ibn Zunbul's audience were privileged to know more than the heroes and victims in his story. Unlike the fictional protagonists, the audience of the story knows how it will end – with the doom of the Mamluks.[44]

After Ṭūmānbāy surrenders to Selim's forces, Selim wonders what sorcery could have induced the Mamluk Sultan to surrender so easily. Nevertheless it is clear that the dreams of Ṭūmānbāy, which led him to perceive the hopelessness of his case, were not the product of sorcery but came from God. The Mamluk Sultanate was doomed not by witchcraft but by divine decree. The occultist may divine the future, but he cannot change it. Ibn Zunbul's Mamluk heroes inhabit a universe of fated doom, and those who, like Khayrbak, can read the signs, know what their end will be. (After death, Khayrbak can still be heard screaming in his tomb.)[45] The instant of Jānbirdī al-Ghazālī's end was psychically intuited by a man in Cairo.[46] Dreams instruct Ṭūmānbāy about his tragic but noble end. Before entering the ill-fated *wādī* where he is to be defeated, he dreams first of a destructive deluge, then of being attacked by five black dogs.[47] A little later, the Prophet appears in a dream to tell him that his cause is lost and his dynasty is doomed.[48] Ṭūmānbāy thereupon casts his sword into the waters (shades of one of the most famous episodes in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, in which Sir Bedivere is instructed by King Arthur to cast Excalibur into the waters; shades too of Roland's decision in the *Chanson de Roland* to destroy his sword, Durandal, lest it be used by his enemies). Ṭūmānbāy is not just a warrior, but also a poet and a Ṣūfī (mystic) 'who has renounced this world' (*'faqīr min al-dunyā'*),[49] and the description of his hanging is somewhat reminiscent of accounts of the gibbeting, in the fourth/tenth century, of the Ṣūfī al-Ḥallāj.[50] On the surface Ṭūmānbāy and the other Mamluk *amīrs* engage in a struggle against the Ottomans with their new military technology. At a more profound level they battle against fate and destiny (*al-qaḍā' wa al-qadar*). The doom of the Mamluks is like that of Abraha and the People of the Elephant in the Qur'ān.[51] The size of an army cannot determine victory. Only a geomancer can foresee which side will win.

Flashback and hindsight are the counterparts of prophecy and prolepsis. Ibn Zunbul moves backwards and forwards in time but never strays too far from the main narrative. His strong grip on the line of the plot leads him (unlike the chronicler Ibn Iyās) to ignore historically important subjects such as the appearance of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean[52] or the deportation of prominent civilians from Egypt after the Ottoman conquest. Despite his superficially cavalier way with chronological sequence, we do not find in Ibn Zunbul the mindless, pell-mell accumulation of *faits divers* that we find in Ibn Iyās. Every event in the *Infiṣāl* has a cause and a consequence – and often occult causes and consequences as well as overt ones.

Dialogue (surely invented) is regularly deployed to make clear the alleged motives of the *dramatis personae*. Dialogue and eloquent monologues are used to set out complex political issues and suggest the possibility of alternative strategies. On the eve of the battle at Gaza, Ṭūmānbāy pauses to compose a ninety-four line *qaṣīda* (ode in classical Arabic) on the decline of Mamluk fortunes. This his *amīrs* dutifully inscribe on one of the Pyramids.[53] (Centuries later, Ṭūmānbāy's alleged venture into literature had the rare distinction of being translated into Swedish as 'Tumanbay's Svane-Sång In Hugged på en Egyptik Pyramid'.)[54] Ibn Zunbul's use of dialogue is plain and vigorous, as when Kurtbāy tells his Ottoman captors where they can put his head once it has been cut off.[55] Such scenes make one realize how primly and properly Mamluk conflicts seem to have been conducted in the pages of Ibn Taghrī Birdī or Ibn Iyās, where never a swearword passes between the contending parties. The use of insulting oaths in Islamic warfare and politics deserves more attention than it has hitherto received.

A significant part of the *Infiṣāl* consists of protagonists abusing one another, or arguing with one another, or engaging in boasting contests. The agonistic structuring of such encounters indicates that, although in one sense the *Infiṣāl* is a thoroughly literary work, in another sense it is not so literary at all, since it is the product of a culture which was only partially literate. Ibn Zunbul's narrative, in so far as it draws on anything other than fantasy, draws on memory and oral testimony rather than on documents. As suggested earlier, it was written not to be read in private but to be recited in public. The book's audience was mostly illiterate and accustomed to oral modes of transmission. The *Infiṣāl*'s scenes of debate and boasting would have lent themselves perfectly to acting out by a professional storyteller (*ḥakawātī*). The battle scenes are no less agonistic and artificial than the dialogues, for single combat between the protagonists features implausibly frequently and prominently in battles. Conflict is presented as personal and concrete in both speech and action. So the abstract theme of the end of chivalry is turned into a play in which the arguments are distributed among the various parts and (I would suggest) all the parts were performed by a single actor, the *ḥakawātī*.

Ibn Zunbul makes artful use of an alternating perspective which switches regularly from the Ottoman camp to that of the Mamluks and back again, the audience being alerted to such shifts by the use of the phrase *qāla al-rāwī*, 'the narrator said'. The narrative focuses fairly closely on three protagonists: Ṭūmānbāy,

the epitome of valour (*shajā'a*) and chivalry (*furūsiyya*), Khayrbak, the envious and malicious traitor, and Selim, the dour and bloodthirsty but astute ruler, who cannot help but acknowledge the merits of his Mamluk antagonists.

Although occult themes pervade the *Infiṣāl*, they do not dominate it, and the book's central theme is the dramatic debate about the contraposed legitimacies of the Mamluks and the Ottomans. In the popular *sīras* such as the *Sīrat al-Ẓāhir Baybars*, the villains were unproblematically Christians, Magians or Jews. Ibn Zunbul, however, is telling the story of a war between two Sunnī Muslim regimes. In the course of the *Infiṣāl* it is argued that Selim's assumption of rule over Syria is legitimate because he is a sultan and the son of a sultan and his dynasty can trace its lineage all the way back to Noah. Selim only wanted to protect the Holy Places and wage Holy War (*jihād*) against infidels and heretics, and feels that it is his duty and destiny to become the protector of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The Mamluks, by contrast, were ex-slaves and ex-Christians who made a regular practice of deposing and killing their sultans; Qānṣawh was an oppressive Sultan; moreover, he sought to obstruct Selim's war against the heretical Qizilbāsh Turcomans.[56] Selim has secured a legal opinion in due form (*fatwā*) to underwrite the legitimacy of his war against the Mamluks.

On the other hand, various characters in the *Infiṣāl* argue the opposite case. The Ottoman aggression is wrong and the Mamluks were right to resist it, for the Qur'ān sanctions self-defence. The Mamluks are fighting to protect their wives and children. Muslim may not attack Muslim. It is not true that the Mamluk Sultanate was a despotism tempered by assassination, as the Ottomans seem to be insinuating. Mamluks became sultans through merit. Qāytbāy had reigned for thirty years (1468–96). The Ottomans employed both infidel soldiers and infidel technology, whereas the Circassian Mamluks fought according to the practice (*sunna*) of the holy warriors 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and 'Umar, Companions and successors of the Prophet. God bestowed chivalry (*furūsiyya*) and valour (*shajā'a*) on the Circassians, and this was their proud boast (*fakhr*).[57]

The Ottoman use of firearms and the evil doings of traitors both played a part in the downfall of the heroic Mamluks.[58] In Ibn Zunbul's narrative, the good men are betrayed by traitors, and the traitors – Khayrbak, Jānbirdī and Aḥmad al-Khā' in – are themselves in turn betrayed by traitors. Yet it must be stressed that both these themes are subordinated to that of the omnipotent role of Fate. The Mamluks of the *Infiṣāl* inhabit a doomed world, not so very dissimilar to the doomed worlds of the medieval feudatories or the eighteenth-century Jacobites as portrayed in the novels of Scott. (Fruitful comparisons could also be made with the doomed Cossacks of Gogol's *Taras Bulba* or with the traditional aristocracy at the time of the Risorgimento in Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo*, with its mockingly deceitful refrain 'Things must change in order that they may remain the same'.) Ibn Zunbul's narrative is pervaded by nostalgia. At one point the author digresses to list the various streets in Cairo in which the Mamluk *amīrs* had their residences.[59] It is an enterprise which is curiously reminiscent of the Tudor antiquarian John Stowe's attempt to reconstruct the topography of medieval London (in *The Survey of London*, published in 1598). Yet though Ibn Zunbul and his audience may have

lamented the fall of the Mamluks, the Mamluk regime was irreversibly doomed, as all regimes ultimately are. The *Infiṣāl* presents a portrait of a society in the process of inevitable change and a caste of warriors engaged in a struggle against history.[60]

It is possible that here Ibn Zunbul, in his tale of the doom of the Mamluks, intended a message for the Ottomans, and that it was one to which the Ottomans were receptive. The story was twice translated into Turkish (by Suheili and Yusuf Milevi), and it was also one of the earliest books to be printed in Ottoman Turkey.[61] As early as the mid-sixteenth century, some Turkish thinkers were already brooding on the possible decline of their empire and, a little later, Ottoman historians would turn to study Ibn Khaldūn's theories about the cyclical rise and inevitable collapse of dynasties.[62] Implicit in the very notion of a *dawla* ('dynasty', 'alternation', 'turn of fortune') is the idea that regimes revolve and undergo 'revolutions'. The Turks interested themselves in *malāḥim*, apocalyptic prophecies attributed to Ibn al-'Arabī and others, which pretended to predict first the triumph of the Ottomans, then the coming of the Mahdī. Perhaps there were some in Ottoman Turkey who, having opened Ibn Zunbul's novel, read its account of past events in the light of their fears about the future. Bearing all this in mind, it might be correct to read the *Infiṣāl* as a narrative which not only relates the downfall of the Mamluks but also tacitly prophesies the future downfall of the Ottomans and looks forward to the End of Time.

Notes

1 Namier (1942), p. 70.
2 See Chapter 2, pp. 17–18, 34.
3 The Arabic Alexander romance.
4 Rosenthal (1968), pp. 46–7.
5 Al-Bakrī, a shadowy author, may have lived in the late thirteenth century AD. The historical Baybars (r. 658–76/1260–77) defeated the Crusade of Saint Louis, then the Mongols, and was proclaimed Mamluk Sultan. His legend gave rise to a *sīra* cycle in numerous episodes of which there is an ongoing French translation (under the general title *Roman de Baibars*); see Bohas and Guillaume (1985).
6 Hitherto only H. Jansky has appreciated Ibn Zunbul at his true worth. Having noted the popularity of Ibn Zunbul's work in the Middle East, he went on to praise it for the richness of its contents and its warmth of speech. He described it as a masterpiece of Arabic storytelling, an epic ('ein Heldenepos') and the rare sort of book that one cannot put down; Jansky (1929), p. 30.
7 Brockelmann, GAL, II, p. 298; S, II, p. 409.
8 Ayalon (1956), p. 100; see also ibid., pp. 86–97 and *CHistIslam*, p. 229.
9 Lellouch (1994), pp. 144–55.
10 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk* (ed. 'Āmir, Cairo, 1962), p. 16. In the passage in question, Ibn Zunbul merely identifies himself as the transmitter (*nāqil*) of the story about a geomancer's prophecy. Where possible, I will refer to 'Āmir's printed text of the *Infiṣāl* in what follows. There is also a lithograph version of Ibn Zunbul's narrative, *Kitāb Ta'rīkh al-Sulṭān Salīm Khān ibn al-Sulṭān Bāyazīd Khān ma'a Qānṣauh al-Ghawrī Sulṭān Miṣr wa A'mālihā*, but this is shorter than 'Āmir's printed text. The latter is chiefly based on a Cairo MS, Taymūr 376, with amplifications and corrections from two other MSS.

11 Ahlwardt (1897), V, pp. 285–7. Ahlwardt claims that Ibn Zunbul died in 980/1572, but it is not clear what the evidence for this is. Haarmann (1970), p. 165 places Ibn Zunbul's death some time after 1553.
12 Ibn Zunbul, *Tuhfat al-Mulūk*, ff. 118a, 191a; Fagnan (1924), p. 136; Irwin (1999) (a), p. 308.
13 Ibn Zunbul, *Tuhfat al-Mulūk*, ff. 123a–b.
14 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, pp. 110–11.
15 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = British Library MS Or.3031 (no title), f. 31b. On Aḥmad Pasha, see *CHistEgypt*, I, pp. 514–15.
16 Ahlwardt (1897), V, pp. 285–7.
17 On the occult works of Ibn Zunbul, see Fahd (1987), p. 203, Klein-Franke (1973), pp. 26–35, Skinner (1980), pp. 19–22, 38–51, 242–3.
18 Ahlwardt (1897), V, pp. 285–7.
19 Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, trans. Rosenthal (1967), III, pp. 182–214; see also Renaud (1943).
20 See *CHistEgypt*, I, pp. 466, 522.
21 On prophetic literature, see Massignon (1963), Fodor (1974), Abel (1977), (1958) and (1954), and Langner (1983), pp. 91–5.
22 Ibn Zunbul, *Tuhfat al-Mulūk*, f. 73a.
23 Irwin (1994), pp. 108–9; on the Fa'alātis and popular life under the Mamluks, see Lapidus (1984), p. 181.
24 For more examples, see Ashley (1997). A recent example of the genre is my own novel, *Satan Wants Me* (1999).
25 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, pp. 58–9, trans. Irwin (1999) (a), p. 446.
26 Ibid., p. 171.
27 Ibid., pp. 20, 24, 133.
28 On the persistence of oral features in literature, see Ong (1989).
29 See Chapter 2, pp. 18, 33–5.
30 See Haarmann (1970), (1971) and (1974).
31 Irwin (1989), pp. 237–40.
32 Brinner (1963).
33 See Al-Azmeh (1998) (b).
34 Forster (1976), p. 40.
35 Ibid., pp. 55–6.
36 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, p. 15.
37 Wiet (1955–60), I, p. 3.
38 On the literary use of self-fulfilling prophecy, see Haarmann (1979), Irwin (1994) and Bell and Langford (1997).
39 Irwin (1994), p. 192.
40 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, p. 71.
41 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = British Library MS Or.3031, f. 27b. This detail is not found in the printed version.
42 Clute and Grant (1997). For invisibility as a theme in the *Thousand and One Nights*, see Elisséeff (1949), pp. 132–3.
43 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, pp. 116–18.
44 On the use of adumbration in fiction, see Hutchinson (1983), p. 165.
45 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālīk*, p. 165.
46 Ibid., p. 163.
47 Ibid., p. 123.
48 Ibid., p. 128.
49 Cf. *CHistEgypt*, I, pp. 406, 498.
50 See Cooper (1998).
51 Qur'ān 105: 1–5.
52 *CHistEgypt*, I, pp. 466–7.

53 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālik*, pp. 77–81.
54 Norberg (1822), pp. 230–8.
55 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālik*, p. 62.
56 See *CHistEgypt*, I, p. 495.
57 See especially Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālik*, pp. 70, 135–9, trans. Irwin (1999) (a), pp. 444–6.
58 On the perils in using Ibn Zunbul as a source on firearms, see Irwin (2004).
59 Ibn Zunbul, [*Infiṣāl*] = *Ākhirat al-Mamālik*, pp. 36–9.
60 For a translation of the passage in which Kurtbāy tells Selīm that the Ottomans defeated the Mamluks not because they were better soldiers but because the Mamluks were doomed by Fate, see Irwin (1999) (a), p. 445.
61 Jansky (1929), pp. 32–3, Rieu (1988), pp. 59–60, Babinger (1927), pp. 56–8, 162, 371–4.
62 Lewis (1962). See also Lewis (1986), pp. 527–30 and Al-Azmeh (1998) (a).

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XXIII

The Political Thinking of the "Virtuous Ruler," Qānṣūh al Ghawrī

What follows is an essay on the politics of high culture. Historians have tended to present the politics of the Mamluk Sultanate and in particular its factional fighting, as ideology free. Apart from a commitment to Islam and the jihad, the Mamluks seem curiously bereft of any form of idealism, role models, or political programs. Modern historians often portray the political strategies and goals of the Mamluk sultans as being almost invariably driven by hunger for power, greed, arrogance, and, in some cases, fear. They have been encouraged in such cynical readings of Mamluk politics by the way in which the medieval ulama, who were effectively the custodians of Mamluk historiography, wrote about the sultans and amirs. Generalizing very broadly, their narratives tended towards the positivist and uninterpretative. But it seems worth considering whether there was at least the pretence of ideology and idealism on the part of the ruling elite.

Most of the ulama did not frequent the court, and consequently they were not party to the way decisions were made and the reasons for those decisions. Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās (1448–ca. 1524) is a case in point. Despite being the grandson of a mamluk, his chronicle, the *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr*, is effectively an outsider's chronicle, based on public proclamations, gossip, and personal sightings of processions and departing military expeditions. While he is prepared to concede that the Mamluk sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī had some good qualities, nevertheless his account of that sultan's reign (906–22/1501–16) is a hostile one and, in his obituary of the sultan, he condemns him for his injustice, confiscations, and greed.[1] Obviously the *Badāʾiʿ* is not a neutral source. Ibn Iyās, a student of al-Suyūṭī's, was an Egyptian *ʿālim* who shared the hostility of the ulama toward the favor shown by Qānṣūh to immigrant Persian and Turkish scholars. (Prominent amongst the incoming Turks was the heterodox Khalwatī Sufi, Shaykh Ibrāhīm Gulshanī.) Ibn Iyās disapproved of the favor shown by the sultan to certain Sufis and the sultan's alleged sympathy for the ideas of the Ḥurūfī poet, Nasīmī, who had been flayed alive for heresy in 820/1417.[2] When the Ottoman prince Qorqud turned up as a refugee at the Mamluk court, Ibn Iyās also seems to have regarded the honor with which that prince was treated as excessive.

As the grandson of a mamluk and son of a member of the *awlād al-nās*, Ibn Iyās resented Qānṣūh's contempt for this increasingly redundant and notional military

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[1] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī Waqāʾiʿ al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden-Cairo, 1961–75), 5:85–93.

[2] Ibid., 86.

group. Qānṣūh treated them merely as a fiscal resource.[3] Though no soldier, Ibn Iyās had inherited an *iqṭāʿ* from his father, and when the sultan confiscated this *iqṭāʿ*, Ibn Iyās had a long fight in the courts to reclaim it.[4] And, despite his Mamluk descent, Ibn Iyās shared the fairly general ulama prejudice against the Mamluks. With his traditional cast of mind he disapproved also of Qānṣūh's raising of the Fifth Regiment of musketeers. Moreover, it seems that as a civilian, Ibn Iyās was not fully aware of the growing military threats posed to the Mamluk regime by the Portuguese, Safavids, and Ottomans, and consequently he regarded all the sultan's emergency exactions as being driven by personal greed, rather than by harsh military necessity. Furthermore, it is plausible that his account of Qānṣūh's reign is colored by hindsight and Ibn Iyās's knowledge that that sultan had led the Mamluks to defeat at the hands of the Ottomans at Marj Dābiq.[5]

Though Ibn Iyās was not a neutral observer and his deficiencies as a historian are clear, it must be admitted that we have scarcely any other sources on what was going on in Egypt during the reign of Qānṣūh. However, two literary sources from the time have survived that shed some light, however dim, flickering, and partial, on the culture and thinking of the sultan. The first of these is the *Nafāʾis al-Majālis al-Sulṭānīyah*. This is a record of the sultan's *majlis*es or soirees during 910/1505. It was compiled by the Iranian Turkophone Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī, also known as Sharīf. In the *Nafāʾis* he logs some of the people who attended and gives an account of the highlights of the evening's debate, which was usually opened by the sultan posing a question. The matters debated included religious, literary, political, and social issues and there were also riddles, jokes, and mathematical problems. The debates, which took place several evenings a week, were normally held in the Duhayshah, a hall within the Cairo Citadel. Quite a few of the ulama seem to have attended.

The second source, the *Kawkab al-Durrī*, completed in 919/1513–14 by an unknown hand, is similar but different, in that it is record of what was said at various *majlis*es of the sultan, but it is organized according to subject matter, rather than chronologically. Qorqud, an Ottoman prince in exile, attended several

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[3] On the collection of substitute money from the *awlād al-nās*, see Carl F. Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamluk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (New York, 1994), 86–87.

[4] Ibid., 7.

[5] On Ibn Iyās, see Eliyahu Ashtor, "Etude sur quelques chroniques mamloukes," *Israel Oriental Studies* 1 (1971): 272–97; David J. Wasserstein, "Tradition manuscrite, authenticité, chronologie et développement de l'oeuvre littéraire d'Ibn Iyas," *Journal Asiatique* 280 (1992): 81–114; William Brinner, "Ibn Iyās," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 3:812–13; Carl Petry, *Twilight of Majesty: The Reigns of the Mamluk Sultans al-Ashraf Qaytbay and Qansuh al-Ghawri in Egypt* (Seattle and London, 1993), 9–10.

of these sessions. Here are some of the topics covered in both these sources, to give a sense of their diversity: Was Adam the first man to speak Arabic? How can prayers and fasting be managed in the land of the Bulgars where there is no sunset or sunrise? Can one recite the *fātiḥah* in Persian? Why do people avoid wearing red or yellow? Who built the pyramids? Why do people beat on cups when there is an eclipse? What is the function of the *maṣdar* in grammar? How old is the world? And there are also chess anecdotes, mathematical problems, jokes about Kurds, a joke featuring Naṣr al-Dīn Khwājah, stories about thieves, the beauty of Joseph, the death of the poet Mutanabbī, praise for the narcissus, and the story of the commissioning of the *Shāhnāmah* and how Firdawsī was rewarded.[6]

Qānṣūh was famous (or notorious) for the favor he showed to Persian and Persian-speaking religious figures and literati.[7] Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī was only one of several Persians who received patronage from him. Moreover, Persian was one of the several languages in which Qānṣūh was fluent.[8] In 906/1500–1 he commissioned a translation of Firdawsī's *Shāhnāmah* into Turkish, not for his own benefit, as he could read the original, but for his Turkish-speaking amirs. The manuscript was illustrated in the Turkman style of the courts of Baghdad and Shiraz. (The vast project took ten years.)[9] Qānṣūh himself composed poetry in Persian as well as Turkish.[10] The early Mamluk sultans did not compose poetry (and very likely they would have thought the practice sissy), but Qāytbāy, Yashbak min Mahdī, and Qānṣūh did, as did several of the Ottoman sultans as well as the Timurid princes Bāysunghur and Iskandar in Fars. By the fifteenth

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[6] The *Nafā'is* and the *Kawkab* were edited and published together (with independent pagination) by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām under the title *Majālis al-Sulṭān al-Ghawrī: Ṣafaḥāt min Tārīkh Miṣr fī Qarn al-ʿĀshir Hijrī* (Cairo, 1941). On these books, see Mohammed Awad, "Sultan al-Ghawri: His Place in Literature and Learning (Three Books Written under His Patronage)," *Actes du XXe Congrès des Orientalistes, Bruxelles, 1938* (Louvain, 1940), 321–22; Barbara Flemming, "Aus den Nachtgesprächen Sultan Ġauris," in *Folia Rara: Festschrift für Wolfgang Voigt*, ed. Herbert Franke, Walther Heissig, and Wolfgang Treue (Wiesbaden, 1967), 22–28; Robert Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 7, no. 1 (2003): 28.

[7] Barbara Flemming, "Šerif, Sultan Ġavri und die 'Perser,'" *Der Islam* 45 (1969): 81–93.

[8] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafā'is*, 132–33.

[9] Awad, "Sultan al-Ghawri," 321–22; Nurhan Atasoy, "Un Manuscrit Mamluk Illustré du Šahnama," *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* 37 (1969): 151–58; Mohammed Mostafa, "Miniature Paintings in Some Mamluk Manuscripts," *Bulletin de l'Institut de l'Egypte* 52 (1971): 5–15; Esin Atıl, *The Renaissance of Islam* (Washington, 1981), 264–65; on the cultural patronage of the sultan more generally, see Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "Sultan al-Ghawrī and the Arts," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 (2002): 71–94.

[10] *The Dîvân of Qânsûh al-Ghûrî*, ed. Mehmet Yalçın (Istanbul, 2002); *Kansu Gavri'nin Türkçe Dîvânı*, ed. Orhan Yavuz (Konya, 2002). For a review of both of these editions, see Robert Dankoff, *Mamlūk Studies Review* 8, no. 2 (2004): 303–7.

century the composition of poetry was seen as a desirable accomplishment for a prince. Incidentally Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī had previously been in the entourage of the fugitive Ottoman prince Jem.[11] It is possible that, during his time at the Mamluk court in the reign of the sultan Qāytbāy, Jem had been instrumental in introducing various Turkish and Persian cultural activities.[12]

There is little precedent for the holding of soirees in Mamluk cultural history, though in the early fifteenth century Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad, the son of the Sultan Jaqmaq, presided over soirees.[13] It seems likely that in holding such cultural soirees, Qānṣūh was inspired not by the past practice of earlier Mamluk sultans, but by literary and philosophical sessions presided over by the Timurids and by the various successor regimes that were established as the Timurid empire fell apart.

Qānṣūh's court culture was a Persianate one, and it looked East for most of its role models—to Shiraz, Baghdad, Tabriz, Samarkand, and Herat. The court of Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā (r. 873/1469–70, 875–911/1470–1506) had enormous prestige. The sultan presided over *majlis*es in a garden pavilion outside Herat, where courtiers mingled with singers, poets, and musicians.[14] Subsequently Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā's rule and patronage were idealized and taken as models by the Uzbeks. Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā was fond of the *muʿammah*, those who posed riddles, and, to judge by his sessions, Qānṣūh was similarly fond of riddling. Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā also held *majlis*es in Herat and a record of these, the *Badāyiʿ al-Vaqāyiʿ*, was made by Zayn al-Dīn Vāṣifī. When the Uzbek Muḥammad Shībānī Khan took over Herat, he presided over *majlis*es, which were mostly devoted to poetry, though the riddling craze continued. Later the Persian writer Vāṣifī gave the Uzbek Kildī Muḥammad tutorials on the model rulers of past centuries. These included Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, Bāysunghur, Anūshirvān, Ulugh Beg, Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna, and Sultan Ismāʿīl Sāmānī. Like Qānṣūh, Muḥammad Shībānī Khan commissioned a translation of the *Shāhnāmah* into Turkish.[15] In Muzaffarid Shiraz, the prince posed questions such as whether *ʿaql* or *ʿishq* came first? Or who was Burāq? His scholars wrote letters giving their replies.[16]

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[11] Al-ʿAzzām, *Majālis,* introduction (separately paginated), 43.

[12] Flemming, "Aus den Nachtgesprächen," 23.

[13] Irwin, "Mamluk Literature," 27–28.

[14] Maria E. Subtelny, "Scenes from the Literary Life of Timurid Herat," in *Logos Islamikos: Studia Islamica in Honorem Goergi Michaelis Wickens,* ed. Roger M. Savory and Dionysius Agius (Toronto, 1984), 143–44.

[15] Maria E. Subtelny, "Art and Politics in early 16th Century Central Asia," *Central Asiatic Journal* 27 (1983): 124–35, 139–42; Thomas Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles and Washington), 256–58.

[16] Jean Aubin, "Le Mécénat Timouride à Chiraz," *Studia Islamica* 8 (1957): 78.

Qānṣūh's preoccupation with his magnificent garden also had Timurid, Aqqoyunlu, and Ottoman precedents. Timur had held court in a series of elaborately planned gardens in Samarkand and these gardens were later rivalled by those established by Shāhrukh in Herat. Later in 1470 Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā began laying out the Bāgh-i Jahān-Ārā, "the World-Adorning Garden," also in Herat. Mehmed II's "paradise-like" gardens and Chinli Kiosk were derived from Timurid prototypes.[17] Josafo Barbaro has described Uzun Ḥasan's garden, the Hasht Bihisht ("Eight Paradises") outside Tabriz.[18] As Doris Behrens-Abouseif has observed, Qānṣūh "worked carefully at constructing his image as poet and scholar and a patron of the secular arts, pursuing the kind of princely image that was cultivated by the Timurid, Safavid, and Ottoman princes, but was unfamiliar in the culture of the Mamluk court. Moreover, there is an undeniable Iranian flair to al-Ghawrī's cultural life, which is evident in his entourage of *aʿjam* and his preoccupation with the *Shāhnāmah*."[19]

Qānṣūh, like Qāytbāy and Yashbak min Mahdī before him, wrote poetry and he presided over a literary court culture. At some of his soirees young mamluks were brought before the sultan so that they could be tested on their reading.[20] On another occasion young mamluks were brought in to be taught singing and poetry by a certain Ibn Ifrīt.[21] There is evidence from elsewhere that young mamluks were also assigned exercises in copying manuscripts.[22]

Apart from commissioning a Turkish version of the *Shāhnāmah*, Qānṣūh had several Persian versions of it in his library. The *Shāhnāmah* was an epic romance celebrating the ancient Persian kings and heroes, but it "was also a political treatise, as it addressed deeply rooted conceptions of honor, morality and legitimacy." It "reflected the attempts of various dynasties to assimilate themselves into the Iranian monarchical tradition."[23] Qānṣūh was no exception and the translated version of the *Shāhnāmah* that he commissioned was given an extended addendum with a discussion of important later sultans, beginning with Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna and ending with Qānṣūh, whose court, soirees, palaces, and madrasahs

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[17] Lentz and Lowry, *Timur*, 38, 108, 257, 317.

[18] Barbaro in *Il Nuovo Ramusio VII: I Viaggi in Persia degli Ambasciatori Veneti Barbaro e Contarini*, ed. L. Lockhart, R. Morozzo della Rocca, and M. F. Tiepolo (Rome, 1973), 120–21.

[19] Behrens-Abouseif, "Sultan al-Ghawrī," 84–85.

[20] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafāʾis*, 107, 116.

[21] Ibid., 63.

[22] Barbara Flemming, "Literary Activities in Mamluk Halls and Barracks," in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), 249–60.

[23] Lentz and Lowry, *Timur*, 126. See also on political messages in the text and illustrations of the *Shāhnāmah*, Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol* Shahnama (Chicago, 1980), 15–17, 19–20.

were all lavishly praised.[24]

Political theory produced by the ulama in the Mamluk period was sparse, sententious, and uninspiring. It was also somewhat pusillanimous. Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Jamāʿah (639–733/1241–1333) has been described by Henri Laoust as "the theoretician of the Mamluk state."[25] According to Ibn Jamāʿah, "the tyranny of a sultan is preferable to the flock being left without a master for a single hour." Ibn Jamāʿah adjusted the preoccupations and vocabulary of earlier political thinkers who had flourished under the Abbasid Caliphate to fit the realities of the early Mamluk regime. He stressed the role of the ulama in advising the sultan and the sultan's duty to protect the ulama. The Muslim people must be led by an imam, but the imamate could be acquired by force (implicitly therefore by a Mamluk sultan). Such an imamate, acquired by force, could obviously be lost by force. Even if the imam was a sinful man, it was generally preferable to obey him, for fear of the anarchy that might ensue if obedience was withdrawn.[26] Ibn Taymīyah (661–728/1262–1328) echoed Ibn Jamāʿah when he stated that "Sixty years with an unjust imam is better than one night without a sultan." He denied that it was necessary for a Muslim community to be governed by a caliph, and he rejected the idea that the imam must be of Qurayshī lineage.[27] According to Ibn Taymīyah, people are enjoined to "patient endurance of the injustice and tyranny of leaders."[28] He accepted the de facto situation in which the military authority had usurped for its own jurisdiction a large number of criminal cases.[29]

In contrast, as we shall see, the kind of material produced by and for the sultan at his soirees belongs in the category of what Patricia Crone has termed *naṣīḥah*, or advice literature.[30] Much of it can also be categorized as mirrors-for-princes. The advice offered was essentially secular, and expedient justice took precedence over the shariʿah. The literature focused on kings and how they could maintain their rule and administer justice, and was Persian in origin (where it went under the name of *andarz*).[31] Often the precepts were delivered in the guise of a last will and testament, a *waṣīyah*, which offered guidance to the succeeding son. A manuscript full of *naṣīḥāt* entitled *A Book Containing Wise Sayings and Literary*

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[24] Atıl, *Renaissance*, 264–65.

[25] Henri Laoust, "Le Hanbalisme sous les Mamlouks Bahrides," *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* 28 (1960): 21.

[26] Ann K. S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (Oxford, 1981), 139–43.

[27] Ibid., 143–51.

[28] Ibn Taymīyah, *Public Duties in Islam: The Institute of the Hisba*, tr. Muhtar Holland (Leicester, 1982), 125.

[29] Ibid., 25.

[30] Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh, 2004), 149–64.

[31] S. Shaked and Z. Safar, "Andarz," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 2:11–22.

Anecdotes has survived in a copy made for Qānṣūh's library.[32]

So now to the actual content of the *Nafā'is* and *Kawkab*. Right at the beginning of the *Nafā'is* in the *muqaddimah*, or introduction to the records of the soirees, a political question is posed and answered in various ways: "Alexander was asked, 'What man is fit to be king?' 'Either a wise man *(ḥakīm)* who is king of wisdom, or a king seeking wisdom,' he replied." Then other ruler-sages, the Faghfur of China, the Caesar of Rome, the Fur of India, and so on, give their pronouncements on the importance of wisdom and the disgrace of ignorance and so on, ending up with Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna and Qānṣūh, who pronounces that "there is nothing better in the world than *adab* [which I take in this context to mean literature], as *adab* adorns wealthy men and conceals the poverty of the poor."[33] Recurrent reference throughout the *Nafā'is* and the *Kawkab* is made to the gnomic sayings of the wise rulers of past centuries. Alexander is a favorite source of sagacious advice, but Anūshirvān (Chosroes) and Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna also feature frequently.

The Alexander who features in Qānṣūh's soirees is not the Macedonian world conqueror familiar to modern historians, but rather a half-Persian legendary seeker of knowledge and eternal life as portrayed in the *Shāhnāmah*. According to the *Nafā'is*, "Alexander was asked, 'What is the best state of the people?' He said, 'When their king has a brilliant mind, sound judgement, and is knowledgeable about government.' He was asked, 'And the worst?' 'When their king lacks all these things.'" And al-Ḥusaynī goes on, of course, to add that, thank God, all these qualities are found in the sultan Qānṣūh.[34] Again, "Alexander said, 'The best of kings is he who keeps justice in his mind and whose excellent qualities inspire those who come after him,'" and once again al-Ḥusaynī is swift to point out that this characterization fits Qānṣūh perfectly.[35] There are many more (not particularly interesting) examples of Alexander's wisdom.

Perhaps such precepts derive from the *Naṣā'iḥ-i Iskandar*, or "Counsels of Alexander," a manuscript of which had been copied for Bāysunghur. Or perhaps they come from Niẓāmī's treatment of the Alexander romance. Although Alexander features prominently in Firdawsī's *Shāhnāmah*, the *Shāhnāmah* does not seem to be the source for the precepts of Alexander as relayed in the soirees. For example, Firdawsī included a version in verse of the letter that Alexander wrote to his mother on his deathbed. The *Nafā'is* also quotes a deathbed letter from Alexander to his mother in prose, but it is full of pietistic platitudes about the acceptance

[32] Geza Féheravari and Yasin Safadi, *1400 Years of Arab Art: A Catalogue of the Khalili Collection* (London, 1981), 42.

[33] Al-Ḥusayni, *Nafā'is*, 3–4.

[34] Ibid., 30.

[35] Ibid., 55.

of death that are not found in Firdawsī.[36] Or, to take another example, according to the *Nafā'is,* "Alexander was told that there were 300,000 men in the army of King Dārāb, but Alexander replied, 'So many sheep do not frighten the butchers.'"[37] Dārāb, Alexander's great foe, does feature prominently in the *Shāhnāmah,* but this particular exchange is not found in Firdawsī's poem.

Farīdūn, a king in ancient Persia who features in the *Shāhnāmah,* is quoted in the *Nafā'is* to the effect that besides having all the virtues, the ideal ruler must have perfect physiognomy, great strength, and a loud voice. Happily again, Qānṣūh happened to have all these characteristics.[38] And here al-Ḥusaynī adds that Persians paint images of their kings and their battles on the walls of their houses so as to perpetuate the memory of those kings, before he goes on to lay out the shari'ah's stipulations for an imam. According to the shari'ah, it is preferable that the ideal imam should be of the Banū Ismā'īl, or, if not from the Banū Ismā'īl, then from the Persians or the Banū Isḥāq. Again it is fortunate that the Circassians are descended from the Banū Isḥāq.[39] Qānṣūh and his panegyrist subscribed to the legend that the Circassians descended from the Arab Ghassanids.[40] Incidentally the more orthodox Sunni position is narrower than that suggested by al-Ḥusaynī, as most medieval Sunnis held that the imam should be of Qurayshī descent.[41]

There are fewer allusions to previous Mamluk sultans, though al-Ḥusaynī records that at one *majlis* Shaykh Ibn 'Amm Abī al-Ḥasan arrived with two books, one of which was the *Sīrah* of al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Baybars and the story of his invasion of the land of the Franks, which he proposed to read in its entirety, but al-Ḥusaynī argued against this, saying that if Baybars were alive today he would want to hear the story of the *majlis* of our Lord the Sultan.[42] Presumably the *Sīrah* in question was the history by Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Ẓāhir, rather than the anonymous folk epic.

Later, when Qānṣūh was preoccupied with preparations for the hajj, the dispatch of an army down to the Hijaz, and the fortification of Jedda, he asked if the hajj was ever suspended. In answer a fairly lengthy account is given of the rivalry between Baybars and Hulagu for the control of Mecca and the hajj.[43]

At one point Qānṣūh tells a most curious story of Muḥammad Qalāwūn (*sic,* but presumably Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn is meant) summoning a group

[36] Ibid., 76.

[37] Ibid., 34.

[38] Ibid., 107–8.

[39] Ibid., 108.

[40] Ibid., 85.

[41] Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought,* 224–25.

[42] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafā'is,* 16.

[43] Ibid., 73–74.

of his beloved and telling them that if they loved him they would throw themselves out of the palace, whereupon they said *"bismillāh"* and threw themselves from the first floor to the ground. As they lay there they shouted up to the sultan, "Our love for you extends this far, and he who can go further, let him be the favored one."[44]

Another story not featured in conventional history books is the story of the fate of an Ottoman fleet sent against the Mamluks during the reign of Qāytbāy. The *amīr kabīr* had advanced out of Egypt to counter the threat. He proposed to some of his retinue they recite the *fātiḥah*. They recited it that afternoon and all of the enemy were drowned by the decree of fate that night. In the morning the Mamluks sent out small ships to seek out those who had tried to save themselves by clinging to bits of wood and cut off their hands. This happy event was all due to the *fātiḥah*.[45] The reference here would be to the Ottoman fleet under the command of Hersek-oğlu Ahmed Pasha, many of whose ships were indeed sunk in a great storm in 893/1488. The *amīr kabīr* in question was the Atabeg Uzbek.[46]

On the one hand, secular and legendary Persian figures are used both to denounce tyranny and to justify kingship. For example, Bahrām ibn Bahrām said, "A lion that crushes everything he devours is better than an unjust king, and he in turn is better than persistent disorder."[47] But on the other hand, Qānṣūh's rule is also justified on religious grounds, for, according to a hadith, "The sultan is the shadow of God upon earth and he who is sincere before him is rightly guided, but he who deceives him errs."[48] The sultan's rule is preordained by fate and sanctioned by God. In one *majlis,* Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maḥallī relates a dream he has had in which a band of armored men looking like Turkmans advanced to invade Egypt, but the Prophet appeared flanked by Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī, and the Prophet declared himself the protector of Egypt. Al-Maḥallī's dream prompts the sultan to recall how thirty years previously, when he was just an amir, he entered the house of Yashbak the *dawādār,* where he encountered an amir who hailed him and told him that he had had a dream in which Qānṣūh had appeared with a ring of iron round his neck. He had taken this dream to Yashbak. They interpreted it as meaning that great power would come to Qānṣūh, and that it was inevitable that he should become sultan.[49] (This, in turn, leads to a silly story about a man who dreamt that Shāhrukh was wearing a pearl the size of a watermelon in his ear.)

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[44] Ibid., 24–25.

[45] Ibid., 57.

[46] Shai Har-El, *Struggle for Domination in the Middle East: The Ottoman-Mamluk War, 1485–1491* (Leiden, 1995), 181–82.

[47] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafāʾis*, 23.

[48] Ibid., 64.

[49] Ibid., 79.

The sultan should be generous. The story is told that Jahānshāh, the Qaraqoyunlu ruler of Tabriz, had very poor-quality black bread distributed at his madrasah, but when threatened by a *faqīr* with retribution in the afterlife, he repented. Qānṣūh claimed that he had resolved to be as generous as the repentant Jahānshāh.[50] The sultan should avoid behaving tyrannically and should offer redress to those who had suffered tyranny. The tale is told of a king of Hind who, when he became deaf, gave orders that plaintiffs who appeared before him who were victims of tyranny should wear red, so that he would not miss their complaints.[51]

At one point the legitimacy of a Mamluk regime is raised. In 890/1485 Qāytbāy had sent one of his closest associates, the amir Jānībak Ḥabīb al-ʿAlay al-Īnālī, on a placatory but ultimately unsuccessful mission to the Ottoman sultan Bayezid II.[52] According to the *Nafāʾis,* when Jānībak entered the Ottoman lands, the Ottomans tauntingly demanded to know by what right the Mamluks, who were sons of infidels, should govern the Bayt Allāh and the Ḥaram (in Mecca). That prerogative should surely belong to the Ottoman sultan, who is the son of a sultan, grandson of a sultan, and great-grandson of a sultan. But Jānībak retorted by pointing out that the father of Ibrāhīm was an infidel and so was the father of Muḥammad. Moreover, the nobility of a person depends upon knowledge and comportment *(adab),* not lineage and descent. Shaykh Kurānī (who was presumably in Jānībak's retinue) added that those present should not even discuss the legitimacy of the sultans of Egypt as they covered themselves with disgrace. Bayezid marvelled at this and he bestowed many precious gifts upon him.[53] Elsewhere in the *Nafāʾis,* ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib is quoted to the effect that a man's nobility, knowledge, and decorum are more important than his lineage and tribe, and it is soon after that the origins of the Circassians are discussed.[54]

In the *Kawkab al-Durrī* another, more minor clash with Bayezid II is mentioned, when Bayezid allegedly wrote to Qāytbāy wanting to know why the latter prefaced his decrees with the words *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm.* Qāytbāy replied that he did so because any important enterprise was defective without the *basmalah.* Why did Bayezid not preface his decrees with a *basmalah*?[55]

In one *majlis* the sultan asked whether the sultan or the caliph took precedence in a funeral procession. Doubtless he was gratified to be told that the sultan did. This in turn led to reminiscences about the dispatch of robes of honor by the caliph

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[50] Ibid., 69.

[51] Ibid., 70.

[52] Har-El, *The Struggle,* 128–30.

[53] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafāʾis,* 133–34.

[54] Ibid., 84–85.

[55] *Kawkab,* 7–8.

in Egypt to Jahānshāh ibn Qarā Yūsuf, the Qaraqoyunlu ruler from 837/1434 until 872/1467, and to the Ottoman sultan Mehmed, presumably Mehmed II. In Jahānshāh's case, when the caliph's emissary explained the gift, Jahānshāh said: "If you were not a stranger, I would have cut out your tongue." Then he made the emissary wear the robe and gave him three hundred dinars for having entered the royal presence. In Mehmed's case, after the emissary had explained the robe in the sultan's council, Mehmed declared that he was himself the Caliph of the World and that every sultan in the world should don the robe. Then he gave orders for it to be cut to pieces.[56]

On a separate occasion another aspect of the caliphate was debated. Did the glory of the sultan of Egypt derive from the fact the he was deputy of the caliph? Al-Ḥusaynī argued that this was not the case, since, if the sultan of the Yemen was independent and his status did not depend on his being the deputy of the caliph, *a fortiori* this must be true also of the sultan of Egypt and the two Holy Places. He was really only the deputy of the shariʿah law. Then al-Ḥusaynī was asked what was said about Baybars when he donned the caliph's robe. Al-Ḥusaynī replied that the caliph's glory derived from the sultan and not vice versa, whereupon one of al-Ḥusaynī's rivals and debating foils in the *majlis* observed that if al-Ḥusaynī had made such a remark in the days of Qāytbāy he would have had his head cut off. This talk of cutting off people's heads made the sultan angry.[57]

The *Kawkab* includes yet another debate on the question of the caliphate. This arose when the Safavid Shāh Ismāʿīl had sent Qānṣūh a book of Mongol history and in it there was an obituary of a certain Shāhīn-bak, where he was referred to as "Caliph of the Age." This raised the question whether it is ever permissible for a king to call himself Caliph. The verdict was that a king can be called Commander of the Faithful and Caliph of the Prophet, but it is not acceptable to call himself Caliph of God or Caliph of the Age.[58]

Occasionally strictly contemporaneous matters cropped up. On one occasion, as the sultan's oxen were being led out to clover, their keepers had run amuck looting shops in Cairo—the sort of thing that had allegedly happened frequently under earlier sultans like Baybars and Qalāwūn. Qānṣūh issued a proclamation banning this *bidʿah*, and he made arrangements through Zaynī Barakat, the *muḥtasib*, for the shopkeepers to be compensated. However, it would appear that during the disturbances some of the sultan's cattle were killed, and therefore four men were crucified and strangled and the rest were disgraced (Ibn Iyās does not mention this incident). In order to emphasize that this truly was royal justice,

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[56] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafāʾis*, 101–2.

[57] Ibid., 111

[58] *Kawkab*, 73–74.

al-Ḥusaynī follows the mention of those executions with a tale about how Sultan Maḥmūd [of Ghazna], disguised as a *faqīr,* was wandering about at night when he was accosted by a sorrowful old woman. When he asked about the cause of her grief, she told him that a trooper *(jundī)* had fornicated with her daughter. Sultan Maḥmūd asked her to describe the man, which she did. Thereupon the sultan had the "trooper" killed, and only after that did he reveal that the executed man was his own son. The anecdote is then capped by a maxim from Anūshirvān to the effect that "rightness of judgement is better than many soldiers and kingship."[59]

The *Kawkab* includes a discussion of what could be done about Birkat al-Ratlī. The area round this Cairene pleasure lake had become a place of low repute where people were drinking alcohol and consuming drugs, and yet some important people, including several of the leading ulama, had acquired houses in the area. The sultan thought that this showed a lack of maturity *(murūwah)* on their part. The celebration of the mock marriage of the Birkah with the Khalīj al-Nāṣirī at the time of the Nile's flooding with the throwing of henna, halva, and other stuff was particularly reprehensible. The crowds included riffraff *(awbāsh),* veiled women, and loose women displaying themselves at windows or on rugs. What should be done about this? The author of the *Kawkab* offers several possibilities, such as filling up the Birkah, without saying what, if anything, the sultan decided.[60] However, Ibn Iyās reports that in 917/1511–12 a decree was issued that none of the civil functionaries should dwell on the banks of the Birkah on pain of severe penalties. So the area became sad and deserted and there were indeed rumors that the sultan was going to close it to boats.[61]

Other incidents from recent times cropped up. In one *majlis* the sultan teased the qadi Shams al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, saying that this man had a vulgar intellect. Here the sultan was alluding to the rebellion of the amir Dawlatbāy against the sultan. (This short-lived affair started in Tripoli in Jumādá II 910/November–December 1504.)[62] At that time the qadi had counselled Dawlatbāy against revolt, warning him that it would come to no good. Dawlatbāy angrily told him to shut up and declared that he had "a vulgar intellect." The qadi then fled from Dawlatbāy.[63]

The sort of political theorizing offered to Qānṣūh was, in its own way, just as sententious as the theorizing of ulama like Ibn Jamāʿah. As Crone puts it in her discussion of advice literature in *Medieval Islamic Political Thought:* "They often seem to be written on the assumption that political problems could be solved by

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[59] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafāʾis,* 120–22.

[60] *Kawkab,* 64–66.

[61] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 4:234.

[62] Petry, *Protectors,* 37.

[63] Al-Ḥusaynī, *Nafāʾis,* 132.

moral precepts."[64] If the ruler is morally perfect there can be no problem. But Qānṣūh was not really perfect.

In these soirees Qānṣūh appears as a vain, pious, prissy, quite witty, scholarly man with wide literary and cultural interests. Contrary to the impression given by Ibn Iyās, he seems to have spent a lot of time listening to the opinions of the ulama. The above has been a selection from an idealized account of what went on at the soirees. Doubtless the questions that were unanswerable, the ums and ers, as well as examples of the sultan's stark ignorance and ugly spats between competitive courtiers, were erased from the record. The aim of both treatises was to glorify Qānṣūh. It may well be that the sultan only paid lip-service to the precepts of Ardashīr and Alexander or the example of Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā. But the point is that these were the models to which he thought he should be seen to be paying lip-service. This was Qānṣūh's self-presentation. It was perhaps not a true one, but it was the fashionable one. And perhaps the sultan himself was as much deceived by this façade of high-minded debate as his courtiers pretended to be. This was the language of despotism in the early decades of the sixteenth century. That story about the deaf Hindu king instructing victims of tyranny to wear red so that their complaints might properly be addressed must have seemed laughable, or rather something to weep over, to those who had witnessed Qānṣūh's licensing of brutal amirs like Qāyt Rajabī and professional torturers like Zaynī Barakat.

In 910/1504–5, the year of the sessions covered in the *Nafā'is,* while Qānṣūh and his courtiers debated obscure points of shari'ah law and the literary merits of the *Shāhnāmah,* the qadi Badr al-Dīn Muzhir was subjected to prolonged and horrific torture under which he eventually died. The *nāẓir al-jaysh,* Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad, had his carefully collected marble arbitrarily confiscated by the greedy sultan. Illegal taxes were levied. Extortion, torture, popular discontent, and threats of revolt were leitmotifs running throughout Qānṣūh's reign. Perhaps the reports of the soirees tell us very little about the real political thinking of Qānṣūh (much less so than the table-talk of Hitler tells us about the mentality of Hitler), but they tell us a great deal about the language of political panegyric and obfuscation that prevailed at the time.

[64] Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought,* 161.

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